

HISTORY of the ARGUMENTS

— FOR THE —

EXISTENCE OF GOD.

RABBI AARON HAHN

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the existence of God



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—FOR THE—

EXISTENCE OF GOD,

—BY—

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(Genesis xxviii. 16); **אכן יש יהוה**

(Ethics of the Rabbis ii. 19); **ודע מה שתשיב לאפיקורוס**



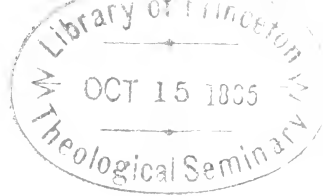
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PREFACE.

This book, a portion of which was published in the *American Israelite* in 1883, is intended to show the efforts that the human mind has made to solve the great problem of the Divine existence.

It is safe to say—and were it for no other reason but because Atheism can never succeed in proving the impossibility of the existence of God—the attempts to argue the Divine existence will be renewed and continued in every generation, no matter how much there will be said or written against it.

It has been often maintained that the triumphs of natural sciences in our century have shaken the foundation of all proofs of the Divine existence. That is not so: just the reverse has been accomplished by the scientifically proved idea of the “Unity of Nature.”

This idea, which means that the laws of nature are all-embracing, that the most distant planets have some of the same kind of minerals that the earth contains, and that heat, light, electricity, magnetism and chemical affinity—this pentarchy of physical force—are so intricately related that they can be converted into one another, implies the ideas of the five main arguments for the existence of God.

The “Unity of Nature,” with regard to its origin, is the cosmological proof; with regard to its aims, plan, products and means, is the teleological proof; with regard to that

PREFACE.

sameness of the human mind that makes comparative psychology possible, is the ontological proof; with regard to the organism of history as a whole, is the historical proof of the existence of God.

God is not to be identified with that "Unity of Nature." He is the cause of it. Without a cause it could not have arisen.

There are some who, like Algazali, Juda Halevi, Rousseau, Jacobi and others, do not lay much stress upon the philosophical argumentation for the Divine existence, and think the only proof of God is man's religious feeling, man's spiritual sense, man's innate consciousness of God. Rousseau called this spiritual sense "*lumieres primitives*," and Jacobi "*testimonium spiritus*."

Whether the philosophical argumentation can engender in man the "spiritual sense" or not, this much is certain: it cultivates it, it strengthens it in the struggles with skepticism, and it refutes the counter-evidences of Atheism.

This book is offered to the public not without the hope that the views presented may be interesting and useful to its readers.

THE AUTHOR.

CLEVELAND, O., June, 1885.

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ERRATA.

Page 41, line 30—for " Baron " read *Bacon*.

" 43, " 18; page 54, lines 10 and 11—for " eternal " read *internal design*.

" 123, " 23—for " evidencee " read *evidence*.

" 131, " 17—for " impose " read *imposes*.

" 171, " 31—for " of Maimon's " read *of Maimonides*.

" 178, " 24—for " phenomena " read *phenomenon*.

" 181, " 21—for " that idea " read *the idea*.

" 202, " 6—for " Algazali (born 1059) in " read *Algazali born (1059) in*.

INTRODUCTION.

„Trotz der Abneigung der gegenwärtigen Theologie gegen alle wissenschaftlichen Beweise, dürfte es nach wie vor, und vielleicht mehr als je, eine Lebensfrage für sie sein, ob sich das Dasein Gottes beweisen lasse oder nicht.“*

No subject in the whole range of human knowledge has been of such great moment in the history of man's thought and progress as the idea of God. Ever since reflection commenced to dawn in man's mind, God or gods have been the object of faith and love, hope and fear, speculation and adoration. The history of the idea of God is closely connected with the history of the moral and intellectual progress of the human race.

The idea of God stands for everything that is great and good, glorious and pure, wise and majestic.

In nature it stands for the principle of all laws; for the wisdom that forms and guides, and for the goodness that preserves and sustains all.

In history it stands for all the ideas and principles of truth and justice, progress and morality, traceable in the sea of events and in the waves of tendencies.

In life Theism stands for all that boundless wisdom, goodness, power, love and holiness are to man's thoughts

* "*Gott und die Natur*," von Dr. Ulrici.

and feelings, will and convictions, sentiments and conscience.

The difficulties besetting a fair treatment of the Theistic problem are great. Proof of this are not only the great differences existing between the God confessed by lips and the God worshiped by the heart, between the God of theories and the God of man's moral conduct, between the God of popular theology and the God of rationalism; but also the history of misapprehensions and errors of the metaphysicians. An adequate treatment of this theme must never be expected, for the finite man will never comprehend the infinite, absolute Being in its total.

The more thought and study one gives to the Theistical problem, the clearer will become to him not merely its real intricacies and its real mysteriousness, but also the fact that a final solution, the way the large mass of people would like to have it, will never be reached.

Cicero relates that the poet Simonides was questioned by the king Hiero "what God was." He asked the king for one day's time to consider. The day passed, but, being unable to make the answer, he asked for two days' more time to consider. It was accorded. Upon asking again for more time to consider, the king Hiero became impatient and desired to know the reason for his delay. Simonides replied: "The more I think of God, the more dark and unknown he still is to me."

The answer of Simonides expresses to the present day the confession of every earnest, thoughtful and profound thinker. The philosophers of the nineteenth century have more knowledge and a deeper insight into the fabric of nature, but as to the essence of God they can not tell much more than old Simonides could.

“ Silence is the becoming praise to thee, O God ! ” are the words of the psalmist.

“ Who shall name Him
And dare to say,
‘ I believe in Him ? ’
Who shall deny Him
And venture to affirm,
‘ I believe in Him not ? ’ ” *

The futile attempts and the hopeless efforts to unveil the great mystery of the Divine nature and attributes have induced a great many to give up reasoning on God and his relations to the world, and to advocate, in its stead, the traditional teachings of popular theology, or agnosticism.

Fully aware of this difficulty were also the metaphysicians Ibn Bachya (in the eleventh century) and Moses Maimon (1135-1204), but nevertheless they considered it not merely praiseworthy, but even man's duty, to reason to his utmost capacity on God's nature and ways.

Their idea was, if man can not know all about God, then let him try to know at least as much as there is within the reach of his comprehension.

Ibn Bachya uses the following illustration : A king appointed as his treasurer a man fully equal to the demands of the office. Somehow or other, this treasurer was prevailed upon by the king's officers to trust blindly their words, and to take the coins without any further weighing or examining. For this credulity the treasurer was re-proved by the king, who would have excused such gullibility only in a treasurer deficient in the requisite qualifications for the office, but not in one who was fully qualified.

* Goethe, “ Faust.”

Thus Ibn Bachya thinks only people unable to reason for themselves are excusable in following the traditional guidance of others, while men capable of reasoning logically ought to exercise this great preference of their mind. The same view was shared by Moses Maimonides in saying, "Our love of God is on the increase in proportion to our knowledge of him."

Concerning the excesses both of the sentimentalists and the rationalists, in treating of God and his nature, the famous French metaphysician, M. Cousin, truly remarked: "Theodicæa has two rocks — one is abstraction, the abuse of dialectics; it is the vice of schools and metaphysics. If we are forced to shun this rock, we run the risk of being dashed against the opposite rock. I mean that fear of reasoning that extends to reason, that excessive predominance of sentiments which develop in us the loving and affectionate faculties at the expense of all others, throws us into anthropomorphism without criticism, and makes us institute with God an intimate and familiar intercourse, in which we are somewhat forgetful of the august and fearful majesty of the Divine Being. * * We escape these opposite excesses of a refined sentimentality and a chimerical abstraction by always keeping in mind both the nature of God, by which he escapes all relation with us, necessity, eternity, infinity, and at the same time those of his attributes transferred to him, for the very simple reason that they came from him."

Those who have relinquished reasoning on God and on his relation to the world on account of the great differences of views prevalent among the philosophers themselves, ought to consider that, no matter what the deficiencies are in the systems of Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Kant, Fichte, Hegel, etc., these metaphysicians have done

incalculably great service to the intellectual progress of mankind and to the investigation of Truth. Each one of them has drawn by the golden buckets of his genius a few drops of truth from the ocean of the manifestations of the Divine Being; and this is about all that can be expected of mortals. Man can not explore the whole sea of the Divine Infinity; at best, he can only catch a few glimpses of the Eternal's glory. The incongruity and discrepancy of the philosophical systems would not be nearly so great if every system, instead of being looked upon as the final solution of the great metaphysical problems, would be considered merely the solution of a certain side to those problems. Each system is only one ray of the great sun of philosophy. Every metaphysical system is, to a certain extent, right, and again, to a certain extent, wrong. For man there is in every truth an occult seed of error, and in every error there is a grain of truth.

God is conceivable only by his manifestations in nature, history and the human soul. They are the signs and evidences of his existence.

The wonderful discoveries and the marvelous results of the modern natural sciences have had such a dazzling effect upon the minds of a great many that they can not see the glory of God in the universe. They can not see how the first Cause can be connected with the secondary causes, and how the metaphysical world can be implied in the physical. Among this class of people atheism arose, the same way as it did among the contemporaries of Plato.

"The cause of all impiety and irreligion among men is that, reversing in themselves the relative subordination of mind and body, they have, in like manner, in the universe, made that to be first which is second, and that to be second which is first; for while, in the generation of all things,

intelligence and final causes precede matter and efficient causes, they, on the contrary, have viewed matter and material things as absolutely prior, in the order of existence, to intelligence and design; and thus departing from an original error in relation to themselves, they have ended in the subversion of the Godhead.”*

This censure of Plato holds good of the modern materialistic literature, in which the confusion of the primary and of the secondary causes is carried on systematically.

The assertion that natural sciences had banished God from nature, and that their results were incompatible with Theism, is entirely false and groundless.

The natural sciences have co-operated in ridding mankind of narrow anthropomorphistic notions of God, but the pure conception of God as an infinite, spiritual, omniscient, wise Being has rather gained in corroboration and proofs by the so wonderful disclosures of modern astronomy, geology, chemistry, dynamics, pneumatics, anatomy, etc.

Nature is at present, no less than ever before, the flaming Sinai of the divine manifestation and revelation. “The modern idea of law, of the constancy, and, therefore, of the trustworthiness, of natural forces,” says the Duke of Argyle, “has been known, not indeed scientifically, but instinctively, to man, since first he made a tool and used it as the instrument of purpose. What has science added to this idea except that the same rule prevails as widely as the universe, and is made subservient in a like manner to knowledge and to will? In the enthusiasm awakened by the discovery of some new facts or of some new forces, and in the freshness with which they impress the idea of

such agencies on our minds, we sometimes very naturally exaggerate the length of way along which they carry us toward the great ultimate objects of intellectual desire. We forget altogether that the knowledge they convey is in quality and in kind identical with knowledge long in possession, and places us in no new relation whatever to the vast background of the Eternal and the Unseen." *

There is no denying that modern natural philosophy is incompatible with dogmatical views of the churches; and that is the reason why priests and dogmatists have always been the enraged antagonists of the progress of the modern natural sciences.

But there is no cause for fearing the influences of natural philosophy if religion means mainly the belief in a wise supreme Preserver of all, and the Father of mankind; the belief in man's responsibility, and the belief that God is to be worshiped by man's dutifulness toward himself, toward his fellow-men, and toward Him whom we shall know, and love, and teach to others.

Science treats the biblical creation-theories as mere legends; but that mysteriousness which religion sees in the creation of the world, science does admit to be real.

Science has destroyed the belief in miracles, but it has in their stead pointed to the real mysteries of the phenomena of the universe which form the portals to the infinite temple of the Most High.

The mysteries of the origin of things and of the preservation of the universe will always defy atheism.

Professor Dr. Noah Porter, President of Yale College, attributing the spread of atheism and agnosticism more to the materialistic and skeptical tendency of the *Zeitgeist*.

* *Reign of Law*, p. 115.

—spirit of the age — than to anything else, says truly: “The new universe of modern science has indeed become immensely expanded to man’s certain insight, and been made immeasurably more impressive to his instructed and quickened imagination. Its spaces stretch out in every direction before the eyes in immeasurable tracts, which the imagination falters in its attempts to traverse. But the instructed eye finds in these most distant provinces examples of order, beauty and goodness as brilliant and overwhelming as in those which are near. New agents have been discovered in the far and the near, the products and actings of which have made science familiar, even to the uninstructed minds, as the minister and magician of art. It would seem at first that these brilliant discoveries, these verified facts and these determined laws have made the old theory of a self-existing, creating and loving intelligence more necessary and more acceptable to the scientific intellect. At the least, we might conclude that the logic of atheism would find no advantage in modern science above the logic of Theism. Such, at least, is the judgment of the unsophisticated intellect, when first confronted with the facts and relations which modern science reveals. It becomes, therefore, a question of more than curious interest, by what process of intellectual legerdemain has the new atheism become so plausible, and by what subtle transitions of thought have the atheistic and agnostic theories so largely taken possession of the *Zeitgeist* of the present generation.” *

The assertion that natural sciences have dethroned God in nature is false, and will remain an error while there will be the least vestige of mysteries in nature, and while there

* *Science and Sentiment*, p. 461.

will be traces of mathematical calculations and geometrical relations and arrangements in the universe.

The French astronomer, Lalande, said: "I have searched the heavens, but did not find God." Indeed! a strange way of seeking, with a telescope in the hands, the invisible God! Lalande betrayed by his words that he had no conception of a spiritual, infinite God. Lalande was a great astronomer, but a poor philosopher. His God was a mere phantom, an idol. The true God can not be detected by means of a mechanical telescope. The true God can be detected only by the telescope of mind and heart, earnest and well prepared to seek the truth. The prophets and the metaphysicians who proclaimed the existence of God, detected him by no other instruments than a reasoning mind and a pure heart longing for something higher and better than mere temporalities and sensual enjoyments.

Lalande could not find God with a telescope, but Galileo Galilei, when he directed for the first time the telescope toward the sky, and saw the marvels of the celestial bodies, could not help but exclaim in amazement and awe: "How great are thy works, O Eternal!"

Science has scaled the heights, sounded the oceans, opened the caverns and beds of fossils, detected the paths of the whirlwinds, analyzed substances, discovered universal laws, disentangled their concatenations, espied the constituents of the planets, numbered the stars, scanned the silvery pavement of the milky way, and has made subservient to man's purposes the elements and the laws of nature. However, in spite of all these wonderful results, it did not succeed in explaining the order, or the cause, or the essence of the laws and elements of nature. In other words, despite all the light that natural sciences have

shed upon the phenomena of nature, the universe itself is at present just as great a mystery to man as it ever was.

"In all directions," says Herbert Spencer, "our investigations bring us face to face with an insoluble enigma. We learn at once the greatness and littleness of human intellect, its power in dealing with all that comes within the range of experience, its impotence in dealing with all that transcends experience. We realize with a special vividness the utter incomprehensibleness of the simplest fact considered in itself. The scientific men, more truly than any other, know that in its essence nothing can be known." *

But even those who believe that natural sciences have dethroned and banished God from nature can not help admitting that God's throne is as firm and as well founded as ever in the human heart and in the consciousness of mankind. The idea of God agitates the human mind at present no less than in previous ages. Even the agnostics, who abide by the dogma of the "Unknowable," take the liveliest interest in the Theistical problem. This is so because the idea of God, being constitutional in man, is an indestructible part of his nature, and can not be discarded at mere pleasure. Arguments to the effect that the idea of God is irrational, a weakness in man, a product of fancy, an heirloom from the past, etc., may weaken or shake, to a great extent, the belief that a great many have in God's providence; but the time will never come when materialism will succeed in the extirpation of that idea from mankind's consciousness. "There are two great enemies to materialism," says the Duke of Argyle, "one is rooted in affection, the other in the intellect. One is the power of things hoped for—a power which never dies; the other is the evi-

* First Princip'les.

dence of things not seen—and this evidence abounds in all we see.”

The idea of God is so inherent in the human heart, and so essential to the intellectual constitution and instinct of man, that to a great many, among them also Lord Bacon de Verulam, it was incredible that man with intelligence and feeling could be so destitute of every religious idea as atheism implies. Yet they were mistaken in that. Men like Von Holbach, the author of “*La System de la Nature*,” D’Alambert and Diderot, the heads of the encyclopædists, were atheists, not merely with their lips, but also at heart; they were conscious atheists.

When, in 1746, David Hume said to Baron de Holbach that he doubted very much whether there are real atheists, and assured him that he had never seen one, the Baron de Holbach replied: “Sir, you dine just now in a company of seventeen real atheists.”

With some the idea has become prevalent that the belief in God is the outgrowth of human ignorance. They say, people being ignorant about the causes and effects of forces and the natural course of phenomena, accounted for everything with the intervention of gods or God. People who do not disregard the facts of history and who do not like to be partial must not repeat the view that ignorance is the mother of the belief in God.

Those who know only a little about the history of human thought must know that the greatest thinkers and the greatest poets were *no* atheists and *no* materialists.

The giant minds of the human race,—Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Bruno, Ibn Sina, Maimon, Bacon, Newton, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Cudworth, Kant, Dante, Shakespeare, Pope, Byron, Lessing, Herder, Schiller, Goethe,

Longfellow, Tennyson, Emerson, etc.,—were anything but atheists and materialists.

It is true these philosophers, scientists and poets vary greatly in their definitions and conceptions of God, but nevertheless they all agree that the highest and greatest idea man can think of is God, the infinite, spiritual and most perfect Being.

“If,” says Professor Frohshammer, “the idea of God were not innate in man, and if man were not constitutionally religious, the grossest ignorance could not have brought him to the consciousness of God. All the ignorance in the world could not have prevailed upon man to believe in God, had he not been organized to that effect. The animals are ignorant enough, and yet they have never arrived at the idea of God.”*

By way of ignorance man certainly would not have come to believe in God; and it is even doubtful whether mere ratiocination and speculation had sufficed to effect that. Professor Lichtenberg’s opinion, that it is questionable whether mere reason, if not influenced by the heart, would have ever come to the idea of God, is not too paradoxical after all, but it must be somewhat restricted.

It has also been asserted that the idea of God arose from the political expediency of kings. In order to have the work of ruling easier, and to make it effectual, the kings went into close alliance with the priests. It can not be denied that religion was made a great agency in bridling and ruling the people, but that does not at all warrant the assertion that the idea of God originated solely from political scheming. The belief in God or gods is undoubtedly much older than political institutions; it is as old as the

* Christenthum und Wissenschaft, 316-318.

hopes and fears, gratefulness and perceptions of human individuals.

Had the idea of God been merely an invention of political schemers, it would have ceased to be a power in those states and governments where despotism and oppression, extortion and tyranny lost their sway.

It is true the belief in God was also abused for political purposes; but has there ever been an idea, or a principle, or a feeling, or a system, or an invention, or any object whatever, which escaped the fate of being abused, at least at a certain time, by somebody? If there are cases in which the idea of God was made instrumental to do wrong, there are, on the other hand, a great many cases where the idea of God was made instrumental to serve the cause of justice, truth, virtue, liberty, etc. Moses, the prophets and a great many other champions of liberty and justice pleaded the cause of the oppressed and persecuted, in the name of God, the Father of mankind.

Those who believe that the idea of God is a mere fiction and invention ought to consider that errors and falsehoods do not last forever. Every fallacy, falsehood and error sooner or later destroys itself. "If," says Professor Fechner, "God and hereafter were nothing but fables, they would not have retained so long their hold upon mankind. Both error and truth can be transmitted historically, but, while the truth is gaining, spreading, and finally triumphant, the error has certain limits where and when it must recede and must make room for the truth. Error is doomed to decrease and to disappear. The idea of God has always been everywhere and among all classes of people, and it has done undeniably much good for the cause of the enlightenment, refinement, unification and progress of mankind. Its hold on mankind

at large is at present not less than ever before. This is a proof of the existence of God."

Since man and everything around him are subject to inexorable and unchangeable laws of nature, and since these invariable and immutable laws of nature are not interrupted and checked by any miracle, a great many scientists dropped the belief in God and substituted for it the "Reign of Mechanical Law." The universe is to them a mechanism, the formation and arrangement of which was brought about, not by an internal principle of development and organization, but by mere external causes and accidental impulses.

The French astronomer La Place, the author of the "*Exposition du Systeme du Monde*," is considered the first representative of the theory that the universe is a mere mechanism, brought about by adventitious causes.

Being asked by Napoleon I. why he, in his "*Systeme du Monde*," nowhere referred to God, he replied: "Sir, je n'avais pas besoin de cette hypothese." These words of La Place have been repeated innumerable, and have been considered the motto of modern atheism, without being examined as to whether there is in them really a cogent and a conclusive idea. A description of the universe, as La Place's "*Systeme du Monde*" is, does not presuppose necessarily a reference to God as the primary Cause of all. Alexander von Humboldt also excludes, in his description of the universe, the "*Cosmos*," every reference to God, and treats only of secondary causes. However, no sensible man will hold that, because La Place and Humboldt excluded from their descriptions of the universe the reference to a first Cause, and because of their treating exclusively only of second causes, there is no such thing as a primary

Cause and that such a thing as a causality of the law of nature is not conceivable.

No matter what effect La Place's answer had upon Napoleon I. or upon thousands of others, one thing is sure—it did not shed any light upon the mysteries of the creation. The beginnings of the inorganic as well as of the organic beings remained just as great mysteries shrouded in darkness after La Place made that answer, as they were before.

La Place and Alexander von Humboldt are considered by the materialists and atheis'ts as the representatives of the theory of the mere mechanical self-construction of the universe. The following quotations from their own works make it doubtful whether they really believed in a mere mechanical arrangement of the universe :

In the "Essai Philosophique sur les Probabilités" (Paris, 1814), La Place not only admitted the existence of a supreme Being, but also argued its omniscience in the following way : "Reason knowing for a certain moment all the forces working in nature, and knowing the mutual relation of the beings constituting the universe, and being also able to analyze them, could comprehend by that very same method the movement of the hugest bodies as well as of the lightest atoms. Nothing could be uncertain to him, and past and future might be open before his eyes. The human mind from what it has accomplished in astronomy may be considered a weak type of such a mind." *

That Alexander von Humboldt did not consider the universe a mere mechanism, caused by mere external impulses, is clear from his definition of nature and his views on the

* L'esprit humain offre dans la perfection qu'il a su donner à l'astronomie une faible esquisse de cette intelligence.

main object of inquiry. Right on the first page of his "Cosmos" it reads :

"Nature is to the reflective observation a unity in the diversity of phenomena; a harmony blending together all forms and mixtures; one great whole of objects and forces animated by the breath of life. The most important result of a rational inquiry into nature will be to establish the unity and harmony of this stupendous mass of force and matter, to comprehend all the individual parts of all discoveries the past offers, to analyze special cases without succumbing beneath the weight of the whole, and to be mindful of the high destiny of the human race, namely, to comprehend the *soul of nature* which is hidden under the cover of all phenomena." *

Humboldt was no atheist, as it has so often been held that he was. Besides, his use in the *Cosmos* of the terms "creation," "created," which presupposes a creator, there is also his religious creed, deposited in his "Memoiren." It reads: "The clergy considering God and Nature two subjects entirely separate might find offense in my views, and in order to avoid persecution I shall not express them publicly.

"And yet my views are only those which were, since the

* „Die Natur ist für die denkende Betrachtung Einheit in der Vielheit, Verbindung des Mannigfaltigen in Form und Mischung, Inbegriff der Naturdinge und Naturkräfte, als ein lebendiges Ganzes. Das wichtigste Resultat des sinnigen physischen Forschens ist daher dieses: in der Mannigfaltigkeit die Einheit zu erkennen, von dem Individuellen alles zu umfassen, was die Entdeckungen der letzten Zeitalter uns darbieten; die Einzelheiten prüfend zu sondern und doch nicht ihrer Masse zu unterliegen. Der erhabenen Bestimmung des Menschen eingedenk, den Geist der Natur zu ergreifen, welcher unter der Decke der Erscheinungen verhüllt liegt. Auf diesem Wege reicht unser Bestreben über die enge Grenze der Sinneswelt hinaus."

(Humboldt's *Cosmos*, Einleitende Bemerkungen.)

remotest antiquity, entertained by all who interpreted the Bible in the light of natural sciences.

“At a very early age people have come to know that there is only one great and mighty power of a creative, preserving and destructive nature. It is the same power which even to-day we call, according to its effects, electricity, light, fire, vital force, etc.

“It is dormant while an absolute unity, a Parabrama. In order to know itself and to work, it resolves itself into two contrasting poles. Then it is the Jehova and the Asasel of the Mosaic writings; the Brahma and Shiva of the Hindoos; the Ormuz'd and Ahriman of the Persians; the Zeus and Hera of the Greek legends.” *

No matter how much fault the theologian may find with this view of Humboldt assuming a duality in the Godhead, this quotation is an authentic testimonial, showing plainly and cogently that he was no atheist and no materialist.

There are scholars who reject the theory that the mechanical construction of the universe is the work of mere accidental, external causes. They believe rather in an evolutionary progressive principle, animating the matter and workings from within. They believe in the “Reign of Laws,” and yet they deny the existence of a presiding Intelligence in the universe, because all in nature is so orderly and because no miracles and no intercession from outside take place. How strange a logic this is! The government of order and of laws, which makes science possible, they do not attribute to a presiding Reason; but the government of disorder, of interruption by miracles, they would capriciously ascribe to a supreme Wisdom. It sounds as if a man would say the running, the working, and the keeping

* *Memoiren von Alexander von Humboldt*, I., 365-366, Leipzig, 1861.

of a machine in good order is not the work of an intelligence; but the disorder of a machine is to be attributed to an intelligent, wise power.

Some people account for everything with the phrases "that is nature," or "it is the law of nature." These phrases do not shed any light whatever upon the origin, preservation, and operation of the phenomena of the universe. They rather imply the confession of man's ignorance in this regard.

The term "law of nature" allows of a great many definitions, but as to the causation of the law of nature, it is of the greatest importance to take it in the sense meaning a definite regularity of causes and effects, of numbers and measures, of relations and reciprocal actions and reactions. It is incontrovertible that there exists "laws of nature" in this sense. Now, can a sensible man think that the laws of physical and chemical changes and properties, and of geometrical relation and mechanical powers have become so definite and immutable, as they really are, by mere hazard, by mere chance, by mere concourses of atoms?

The "laws of nature" presuppose a creator, a regulator, a methodizer, and at all events a qualifier who has fitted the matter and force, the properties and conditions for their efficacy and functions, and who endowed them with their tendencies of combination, disseveration, etc.

Benedict Spinoza was also in the habit of accounting for every phenomenon and event by the "law of nature," but occasionally he gave the following explanation: "The laws of nature, according to which everything takes place and is determined, are nothing but the eternal decrees of God. If we say everything takes place according to the laws of nature, or everything takes place according to God's decrees, we say one and the same thing. Further, the power

of all things of nature being nothing but the power of God, which alone can make everything, it follows that all that man—who is only a part of nature—acquires for his subsistence, or what nature furnishes him with, without his co-operation, must be considered as given him alone by God.” *

The Danish professor, Oersted, who secured historical immortality by the discovery of the “electro-magnetism,” considering all existence a dominion of reason, expressed his opinion about the “Reign of Laws,” as follows: “All natural laws form together a unity, which, viewed in their activity, constitute the essence of the whole world. If we investigate these laws more closely, we find that they harmonize so perfectly with reason, that we may assert with truth that the harmony of the laws of nature consists in their being adapted to the dictates of reason, or rather by the coincidence of the laws of nature and the laws of reason.

“The chain of the natural laws, which, in their activity, constitutes the essence of everything, may be viewed either as a natural thought, or more correctly, as a natural idea; and since all natural laws constitute but one unity, the whole world is the expression of an infinite, all-comprehensive idea, which is one with an infinite reason, living and acting in everything. In other words, the world is a revelation of the united power of creation and reason in the Godhead. We can now first comprehend how we can recognize nature through reason, for reason again recognizes itself in all.” †

It is noteworthy how all naturalists and philosophers of

* Spinoza's Correspondence.

† The Soul of Nature, Bohn's Edition, 450-451.

olden, as well as of modern times, agree upon a unity of force underlying the infinite variety of phenomena, compassing them as a tie, and pervading them as a common element.

That One in the many, *that Unity* in the diversity, *that general element* in the perpetual metamorphoses of forms and forces, is considered *the Being*, truly existing, and the ultimate ground of all that is ideal and real, subjective and objective.

That common root of all phenomena and existence was called "the principle of water" by Thales; "the principle of air" by Anaximenes; "the principle of fire" by Heraclit; "the idea of good" by Socrates, Euclid of Magara, and Plato; "substance" by Spinoza; "the universal monad" by Leibnitz; "the thing *per se*" by Kant; "the Ego" by Fichte; and "the abstract being" by Hegel.

That there is such a unity in the diversity of the forces and forms of nature has been incontrovertibly confirmed by the brilliant discovery of the "correlation of physical forces," by Grove and Toulet.

Until recently, it was thought that there was an essential difference between light, electricity, magnetism, motion, etc. But Grove and Toulet have shown that all these forms are correlated, so that one of these various forms of physical force can be turned into one or more of the other forces.

Now the question urges itself upon man's mind, what is the essence or quality of that fundamental force or law? No mortal can tell. This is a mystery. Will that mystery ever be unveiled? Professor Eduard Zeller thinks that since the fundamental unity of force comprises not merely unconscious but also conscious forces, and not merely material but also spiritual beings, our conception of that

fundamental force is only correct and true when implying the causation of the unconscious and conscious forces, and of the material and spiritual beings.*

* Ueber die Aufgabe der Philosophie, 20.

I. THE COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT.

„Nun entsteht die Frage: Kann diese unendliche Reihe von Ursachen und Wirkungen, ohne Abhängigkeit von einem nothwendigen und unveränderlichen Wesen, für sich bestehen oder nicht? Erhält sich diese Kette ohne Anfang und Ende durch die Unendlichkeit von selbst oder muß sie irgendwo am Throne der Allmacht befestigt sein, um durch diese Verbindung mit dem nothwendigen Wesen in Wirklichkeit kommen und erhalten werden zu können?“*

Experience and reasoning teach that all subjects and events in the world are both consequents and antecedents. One would think that there is nothing more natural for people—seeing every day existences and events not merely proceeding from causes, but also again becoming causes for other existences and events—than the putting of the question whether there has been in the world an endless process of causes and effects without an ultimate cause, or whether all the secondary causes operating in the universe originate from one parent cause.

But, strange enough, it took a long time for this question to urge itself upon mankind and come in the foreground. It did not exist for the Ionic philosophers. To them any of “the elements”—the water, the fire, the air—were the fundamental principles of all. The matter of which all things arise, into which they dissolve, and which, in the midst of all changing conditions, remains essentially the same, they considered the beginning of all. And even Anaxagoras

* Moses Mendelssohn's *Morgenstunden*.

and the Eleatic school, though they assumed that cosmical matter is shaped by an intelligence, yet they had no special inducement to reflect on this problem, because to them that world-shaping intelligence was coequal with the cosmical matter. They were Monists. God was to them no independent being; nor did they consider mind and matter in the light of an antithesis. Also Plato did not penetrate to the problem of a first cause. He conceived God in a two-fold relation: as substance and cause. All that is depending upon space and time is not so perfect as that which is immutable and universal. The real essence of all things he termed "the ideas," which are immutably universal and form the essence of God. Upon the form of these eternal "ideas" was shaped the order of things, and they constitute the eternal types and imprints of all forms.

The Being, of whom all these eternal ideas or types form the essence, has been operating upon all that is changeable, and is on that account to be called the cause of all forms. This theory is the keynote of Plato's theology. Plato treats only of a formative cause, but not of a first cause. This was reserved for Aristotle, the man of wider generalization, deeper reflection, and of a farther penetration in the phenomena of nature, their concatenations and relations to one another, than any of all his predecessors.

Considering nature a connected system, the parts of which, being united into a whole by one mind and directed by one will, he was led to the question whether there is not behind the endless play of causes and effects an ultimate cause enveloping the origin of all phenomena. "It is clear," says Aristotle, "that all depends upon the knowledge of the first cause, for only he knows an existence who knows its first cause." *

* Metaphysics, I., 3.

By *cause* Aristotle understands something that explains the origin and the nature of an existence. He (Metaphysics, I. 3) analyzes causes into four kinds :

The material causes, which he, like the Ionic philosophers, was seeking in the principal elements of fire, water or air.

The efficient causes, producing change and motion.

The formal causes, being the real and invisible essence of all forms ; or, as Plato termed them, the "ideas."

The final causes, which are the designs in nature or the reasoned ends of the phenomena.

Above all these causes there is a first cause moving all, but is itself unmoved. Matter, being too inert and too passive, could come into motion only by an outside force, which Aristotle termed *Proton Kinoun*—the first motor, the *primum movens*.

This reasoning is called the cosmological proof. The assumption of an endless series of causes and effects without a first absolute cause, Aristotle considered an absurdity.

The theory of Aristotle's "first cause" was for centuries adopted by the Jewish, Christian and Mohammedan metaphysicians as safe, sound and self-evident.

Special attention was given to the "first cause argument" by John Donus Scotus, an acute metaphysician (died 1308), who was the first to separate philosophy from theology, reason from faith, and natural from supernatural theology.

According to Scotus, the existence of God can not be inferred from the mere idea man has of him (*ex terminus*), nor can it be proved *a priori*.

The *a posteriori* arguments he considered sound and reliable.

He divided his demonstration of a first cause into three parts, of which the first one treats of the premises, that

all products are brought about either by nothing or by themselves, or by an exterior cause.

He comes to the conclusion that as of nothing nothing can arise, nor can anything make itself, it must be assumed that all existences are the products of an exterior force, which is God. However, he thinks the existence of a first cause is not so self-evident as to be admitted without any further argumentation. To that effect he classified the causes in essential ones—*causarum essentialiter*—when the causes and effects are simultaneous; and into accidental causes—*causarum per accidens*—when the causes and effects are not simultaneous. The accidental causes proceed from the essential ones, an endless series of which is unimaginable.

In the second part of his demonstration he argues that coequal with the first cause are also the ultimate designs and the prime perfection. The more comprehensive the first cause is, the more comprehensive must be also the ultimate design.

In the third part of his demonstration Scotus argues that the three primordials—the first cause, the ultimate design and the prime perfection—are essentially connected, forming the modes of the manifestation of the same Being.

Since Aristotle it was maintained that the nature of the Divine existence must be essentially different from the nature of the existence of the creatures. Scotus controverted this view by the dilemma: If God's mode of existence is essentially or entirely different from that of the creatures, then the inference is correct that either God does not exist or the creatures do not exist.

The great nominalist, William Durandus de St. Touraine (died in 1332), argued for the existence of God in three ways:

Via eminentiæ, there are all grades of perfection in existence, but God is the most perfect grade of them all.

Via causalitatis, every effect is produced by a cause, and no matter how far back the vista of effected causes reached there must be an ultimate cause where the chain of the efficient or secondary causes commences.

Via necessitatis, from nothing nothing can come, nor can anything come into existence of itself.

In the century in which Scotus and Durandus made such great exertion to fortify the cosmological proof, there lived also their antipode, William Occam (died 1347). He was the chief representative of the principle of the "double truth," according to which one may deny in the capacity of a philosopher what he believes in the capacity of a theologian, and *vice versa*.

William Occam was the first one who attempted to undermine the cosmological proof advanced by Aristotle. In his book—*Centilogum Theologum*—he expressed a great distrust in all *a posteriori* argumentation. His starting-point was that no apodictical knowledge must be expected from the mere sensuous perception. The senses merely intimate that there is something existing, but through them alone one can not arrive at clear conceptions. Thus, through senses we perceive the smoke, but we do not always see the fire producing it; or, we hear the groans, but do not see the pain causing them. More reliable than the sensuous perception is, to Occam, the intuition which gains the necessary truths by mere reasoning, without any assistance from the external observation.

It being impossible for him to arrive at the conception of God by intuition, he did not consider the existence of a Supreme Being of a logical cogency: but nevertheless he

was so far from denying the Divine existence that he did not think even a plurality of Gods impossible.

His belief in God he rested upon the preservation of the order and harmony and upon the preservation of the universe.

He maintained that it is not necessary at all to assume that efficient and formal causes must emanate from a first cause.

Like Occam, Peter de Aily (died in 1425) would, by means of the chafing undulation of skepticism, wash away the rock of the cosmological argument ; but he did not succeed better. Furthermore, he holds that an infinite series of causes and effects was not unimaginable, there being things which cease to operate without an external cause ; and so also a beginning without an external impulse, was to him not unimaginable.

Both William Occam and Peter de Aily did not deny the existence of God ; they merely disputed the Aristotelian theory, it being absurd to assume that the cosmical matter could have come into motion without a first impulse from an exterior cause, and that an endless series of causes and effects without a connection—without a first cause—was unimaginable. It is only a pity that they have not corroborated their views by facts

These ideas of Occam and Peter de Aily were resumed by Hobbes and Locke. They considered the whole causation theory only a psychological necessity or a mere mode of human thought ; and this theory gained such a hold upon the minds of the scholars that Leibnitz considered the cosmological argument lost if it be not given another more rational meaning.

Leibnitz tried to do it in this way : All the phenomena of the world are contingent and changeable and have not the real cause of their existence in themselves. Now,

where is that first cause? It can be either within or without that contingent world. In that contingent world it can not be, else it would be also changeable or contingent; consequently it must be without and independent of that world which is a complex of contingent and changeable phenomena.

The first cause is not merely the first link of the chain of causation, but it is that absolute, self-sufficient power, qualifying the elements and laws of nature, and befitting them for their relations and functions.

Connecting and permeating all contingent and changeable things into a total, that absolute, self-sufficient, primitive cause is the sum of all possible realities, or the sufficient cause—the *causa sufficient*.*

Of this cosmological argument, as set forth by Leibnitz, the English metaphysician, Dr. Samuel Clarke, availed himself in the formation of his proof, which reads:

“First, then, it is absolutely and undeniably certain that something has existed from eternity. This is so evident and undeniable a proposition that no atheist in any age has ever presumed to assert the contrary; and therefore there is little need of being particular in the proof of it. For, since something now is, it is evident that something always was; otherwise the things that now are must have been produced out of nothing, absolutely and without cause, which is a plain contradiction in terms. For to say a thing is produced and yet that there is no cause at all for that production, is to say that something is effected when it is effected by nothing; that is, at the same time when it is not effected at all. Whatever exists has a cause, a reason, a ground of its existence (a foundation on which

* Princip. Philosophique, 36-41.

its existence relies; a ground and reason why it does exist rather than not exist), either in the necessity of its own nature, and then it must have been of itself eternal; or in the will of some other being, and then that other being must at least in the order of nature and causality have existed before it.

“That something, therefore, has existed from eternity, is one of the most certain and most evident truths of the world, acknowledged by all men and disputed by none. Yet, as to the manner how it can be there is nothing in nature more difficult for the mind of man to conceive than this very plain, self-evident truth. For, how anything can have existed eternally, that is, how an eternal duration can be now actually past, is a thing utterly as impossible for our narrow understanding to comprehend, as anything that is not an express contradiction can be imagined to be, and yet to deny the truth of the proposition that an eternal duration is now actually past, would be to assert something still more unintelligible, even a real and express contradiction.” *

After a dilation on the difficulties of knowing God, Clarke made the argumentation just stated, the basis of his second cardinal principle in the following words:

“There has existed from eternity some one unchangeable and independent Being: for, since something must needs have been from eternity, as has been already proved and is granted on all sides, either there has always existed some one unchangeable and independent Being, from which all other things that are or ever were in the universe have received their original; or else there has been an

* Samuel Clarke's *Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God*, 8-9.

infinite succession of changeable and dependent beings produced from one another in an endless progression, without any original cause at all. Now, this latter supposition is so absurd that, though all atheism must terminate in it, as it accounts of most things, yet I think very few atheists were ever so weak as openly and directly to defend it. For it is only impossible and contradictory to itself. * * *

But if we consider such an infinite progression as one endless series of dependent beings, it is plain that this whole series can have no cause from without its existence, because in it are supposed to be included all things that are or ever were in the universe; and it is plain that it can have no reason within itself of its existence, because no one Being in this succession is supposed to be self-existent, but every one dependent on the foregoing; and where no part is necessary, it is manifest that the whole can not be necessary. Absolute necessity of existence is not an intrinsic relative and accidental demonstration, but an inward and essential property of the nature of the thing which so exists.

“An infinite succession, therefore, of merely dependent beings, without any original independent cause, is a series of beings that has neither necessity nor cause, nor any reason of ground at all for its existence, either within itself or from without.” *

A new assault was made upon the cosmological argument by the great German metaphysician, Kant. Being resolute to try his utmost in refuting it, he did not take it in the sense given it by Leibnitz and Clarke; it was easier work for him to invalidate it when taken in the old Aristotelian sense. However, Kant failed even in that way.

* Demonstration, pp. 11, 12.

Like William Occam and Peter de Ailly, Kant also thought an infinite series of causes and effects imaginable, and, also like them, he did not advance any conclusive evidence in support of this view.

It will be borne in mind that Kant had no atheistic tendencies at all. His main objection to all *a priori* and *a posteriori* proofs was that, by way of speculation, man can not succeed in demonstrating apodictically the existence of God. His sincere belief was that only the ethical nature of man teaches the knowableness of God. This assertion was so much to the taste of the theologians, that they overlooked all the criticism he passed on the cosmological, theological and ontological arguments; and, indeed, there has never lived a philosopher of an original turn of mind who was less persecuted and molested by the theologians than Kant.

With all his ingenuity and acuteness, he could not succeed in showing that a first cause was unimaginable; on the contrary, he admitted the possibility of a first cause, and his main criticism concerned merely the nature of that first cause.

Human experience, he propounded, being only limited, does not warrant any other than a cause commensurate with the effect. It does not warrant that that first cause was an unconditioned, perfect being. That first cause may be a fate, a necessity, a purposeless cause a blank essence.

It is true, the experience made in one sphere is not always and necessarily applicable beyond that sphere; but the very concession of Kant that there is a first cause, is of the greatest importance to theology. This concession is a starting-point for the theologian. Kant ought to have considered that there have been a great many phenomena and events predicted and foreseen in history and natural

science, though experience did not warrant them. La Verriere predicted the appearance of Neptune, though it was not warranted by past experience.

The reasoning from the conditioned upon the unconditioned, from the contingent upon the absolute, from the finite upon the infinite, from secondary upon primary causes is so obvious, that all caviling, dialectical hair-splitting and sophistry will not prevail to eradicate from man's sound common sense the belief in a "first cause," or, as Leibnitz calls it, the "sufficient cause."

Dr. Asa Gray, Professor in the Harvard University, one of the greatest naturalists and, in America, at present the greatest Darwinist, said: "The notion of an eternal sequence of cause and effect for which there is no *first cause*, is a view which only a few sane persons can long rest in.*

And John Stuart Blackie, Professor in the Edinburgh University, thinks: "The wretched cavil about invariable sequence, which David Hume introduced and John Stuart Mill made fashionable for a day, will no more do away with the idea of causality in the great mass of normally constituted minds than the assertion that the regular going up and down of a piston in a cylinder renders the supposition of a constructive reason in the person of a James Watt superfluous, in order to explain the existence of a steam-engine. If physical science can put its fingers on nothing but a series of sequences, it merely proves that science is no philosophy, and is altogether a subordinate affair; but when philosophers, with their acute spectacles, can see nothing in the world but an infinite series of invariable sequences, the sooner they give up their profession of wisdom the better; for it is just the invariability of the

* Darwiniana, 58, 1876.

sequences which forces the reasonable mind of man to assert that there is a cause within them or behind them, which makes the invariability possible." *

Modern physical science has been revolutionized and put upon an entirely new basis by the discovery of the conservation of forces and continuous motion. The conservation of forces means that matter is not, as was believed in former ages, destructible, but that the quantity of matter and force has always been the same in the one or the other form, and the theorem of the continuous motion means, that there is no real stand-still in forces and no tendency to entire rest, as was the opinion formerly, but that all is in a state of motion and subtle transformation.

These two brilliant discoveries in modern physical science have been advanced as evidences against the existence of a first cause.

Now, it is claimed with a triumphant air, if matter and force have been in continuous motion and transformation, then this does away with the idea a first cause being necessary.

This is no conclusive evidence whatever. The objections raised to Kant, as to the nature of the first cause being perfect, are applicable also to these two theorems.

No sensible man will infer, that because matter and force are indestructible and in continuous motion in the sphere of our experience, that they are so also outside the narrow sphere of our observations.

If the causation idea concerning the first cause is not founded in nature outside our mind, but is merely a mode of our thought, a psychological necessity, then the ideas of the indestructibility of matter and of a continuous motion

* Natural History of Atheism.

may also be only modes of our thought and psychological necessities, because it is impossible for us to believe that, in a natural way, there can become of something nothing and of nothing something.

It is a gross mistake to think that the modern theorems of *indestructibility of matter*, of *continuous motion* and of *correlation of forces* have banished and wiped out the theory of a first cause as an error. Just the reverse is the case. These theorems imply the idea that back of all changes and effects is something that is *unchangeable*, *persistent* and *absolute*. All transformations of the natural phenomena are only modes of manifestations of that *something* that is *unchangeable*, *persistent* and *absolute*; and to that something the character of a first cause may be assigned. It is

“Above all things, below all things;
Around all things, within all things;
Within all, but not shut in;
Around all, but not shut out;
Above all, as the Ruler;
Below all, as the Sustainer;
Around all, as all-embracing Protection;
Within all, as the Fullness of Life.” *

* Hildebert de Tours, in J. Clark's Ten Religions. Vol. II.

II. THE TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT.

“Ceux qui ont dit qu’une fatalité aveugle a produit tous les effets que nous voyons dans le monde, ont dit une grande absurdité: car quelle plus grande absurdité qu’une fatalité aveugle qui aurait produit des êtres intelligents.” *

The great order, harmony and wisdom displayed and manifested in nature, urged imperiously and overpoweringly upon man’s reflective mind the idea that the structure of the physical universe was the work or the product of a Supreme Intelligence, and was brought about with a design.

The regularity of the seasons and of so many remarkable phenomena; the forms and constructions of organized beings; the individual, domestic and social instincts of the animated kingdom; the relations and adaptations of the parts of the bodies to the whole—in short, the entire architecture of the universe—impressed man as being so wonderfully devised, that it was impossible for him to think of accounting for the existence of all this otherwise than by the assumption that a presiding intelligence produced, or, at least shaped it all.

Cicero said: “I will not believe that the world is the product of mere chance till I shall see that boxes of letters, used to teach children the alphabet, will arrange

* Montesquieu, *Esprit de Lois*, I.

themselves, by merely being overturned, into well-reasoned treatises."

Nevertheless, in every generation there have been people living who either overtly or covertly denied the Providence in nature. They did so from no other reason than because so many and so great evils, anomalies and perturbations were allowed to take place.

They reason: If there were a Providence, cases like earthquakes, inundations, shipwrecks, storms, murders, robberies, madness, idiocy, etc., would never occur.

People reasoning thus ought to bear in mind that there are no absolute evils. All evils are only relatively so. Evils, or the law and principle by means of which those evils occur, may be in some instances quite horrible and appalling; but in many cases, or in general, they may be of the greatest benefit—nay, even indispensable for the development and destination of the creatures and for the regulation and harmony of the world.

The truth is, the evils are not for the sake of the evils, but they are in the household and economy of the universe productive of much good, often where we expect it the least.

The evils of the world, even in their total, can not be considered of sufficient conclusiveness to prove anything against the existence of Providence.

In an immense world of all imaginable and unimaginable tendencies of elements, forces and laws, collisions, though fatal to individual existence, are unavoidable. And the more one reflects on the office and agency of the physical and moral evils of the world, the readier must he be to say with the English poet, Pope, "Presume not God to scan." Man judges merely by the impressions of the moment and by his personal advantages, while God rules with regard to the whole and to eternity.

"The existence of evil," says Professor Blaikie, "is no proof that there is no God; but it is by this overcoming of evil constantly that God proves himself to be God; and man proves himself to be godlike when, in his subordinate sphere, he does the same. The only real evil in the world is the negative carping spirit—the Mephistopheles of Goethe's *Faust*—which, for lack of will to use the given material in the given way, gratifies an unreasoning restlessness in blaming everything and doing nothing."

The Bible teaches that all works of God are as perfect as he would have them. The very fact that this is the view of the Bible, has been an inducement for many to contradict it and to try to find fault with almost all works of God.

The following, from Robert G. Ingersoll's lecture on "The Gods," is a specimen of that kind of fault-finding:

"A very pious friend of mine, having heard that I had said the world was full of imperfections, asked me if the report was true. Upon being informed that it was, he expressed great surprise that any one could be guilty of such presumption. He said that, in his judgment, it was impossible to point out any imperfection. 'Be kind enough,' said he, 'to name even one improvement that you would make if you had the power.' 'Well,' said I, 'I would make good health catching instead of disease.'"

This argument, advanced by the grandiloquent Mr. Ingersoll with so much self-complacency, is just as irrational as if he had said, "if I had the power to make improvements, I would make vinegar taste as sweet as honey and sulphur as fragrant as incense." Contagiousness is nothing but a chemical process. To desire that the contagious diseases shall not be catching, means to desire that the laws of nature underlying those chemical processes shall cease to work.

Mr. Ingersoll's words imply the idea that, had he the power to make improvements, he would put an end to the natural causes and effects in nature, and would rather perform miracles.

As to the office of evils in nature, Mr. John Stuart Mill thinks: "Along with the preserving agencies there are destroying agencies, which we might be tempted to ascribe to the will of a different Creator; but there are rarely appearances of the recondite contrivance of means of destruction, except when destruction of one creature is the means of preservation to others. Nor can it be supposed that the preserving agencies are wielded by one Being, the destroying agencies by another. The destroying agencies are a necessary part of the preserving agencies: the chemical compositions, by which life is carried on, could not take place without a parallel series of decompositions. The great agency of decay, in both organic and inorganic substances, is oxidation, and it is only by oxidation that life is continued for even the length of a minute." *

The argument for the existence of God, derived from the vestiges of design and finality in nature, is called the teleological or the physico-theological; and the first metaphysician to apply it was Socrates, the great monotheist among the Greeks.

It is true that before him Anaxagoras believed in one God, but to judge from the censures passed upon him by Socrates and Plato, he must yet have entertained a very deficient notion of a Supreme Being. While the God of Socrates was a spiritual Being and the absolute Creator and Ruler of the universe, the God of Anaxagoras was a mechani-

* Three Essays on Religion, 1874, page 185.

cal power, a mere mover of the matter, a purposeless force, a *deus ex machina*. Nor did Anaxagoras attribute to his god any moral qualities. This was done first by Socrates, who considered God a supreme judge and lawgiver, an adorable Being that can be worshiped only by love, goodness and dutifulness.

In proof of the existence of God, Socrates referred to the structure of the organized living beings; the parts of their organisms are so adapted and subserve so well to the whole, that one can not help to pronounce it the work of a supreme wisdom, called God.*

Plato, the disciple of Socrates, resumed the theological argument of his master, and extended its application to the celestial orbs. The rapidity and harmony in the movement of the sidereal bodies were to him an indisputable evidence of a design in nature. To Plato, God was the consummation of goodness, wisdom and of all moral qualities. But just on that account he was perplexed by the question: If God is the consummation of goodness, purity and wisdom, why does he allow so many irregularities, anomalies and evils to take place?

In solution of it, he held that the evils do not come from God, but originate from the primitive matter, which was co-equal with God. Inherent in that primitive matter was a tendency to irregularity, disorder, confusion, chaotic changes and heavings; but it was God who, in the capacity of a world-builder, forced the primitive matter into that arrangement of harmony, proportion and mathematical forms and relations which is manifested in nature.

Though God in doing so was actuated by mere goodness, which is essential to his nature, being merely the architect

* Xenophon's Memorabil., I., 4.

and not the world-creator, he could not succeed in forcing the matter so entirely as to make all irregularities impossible. Such a forcing would have destroyed the nature of the primitive matter; hence the evils and the blind necessity in the world.

Plato's disciple, Aristotle, did not treat of the moral nature of God at all. God was to him an object of the greatest interest to reflection and speculation. He regarded only the metaphysical wants of man. Plato considered goodness, while Aristotle considered reasoning, as the prime attribute of God. It was one of the dogmas of Aristotle that God and nature do not do anything in vain.* He considered the world an eternal system, in which matter and form have always been operating; but the first impulse to that operation came from without, from an intelligent, immaterial, perfect Being. He did not consider God the creator of the world. Having given merely the first impulse to the inert matter to come into motion, his relation to the world was that of a mere regulator, keeping the world in order and harmony.†

God can not be made responsible for the evils, anomalies and irregularities in nature, as he has given merely the impulse to nature to work, and has not created it; and consequently, Aristotle accounted in this way for the failures and shortcomings in nature.

In a moral respect, Plato's conception of God as a consummation of goodness stands higher than that of Aristotle, while metaphysically Aristotle's conception of him, as being independent of matter, conforms more nearly to

* De Celo, I., 4.

† Metaphy., XII., 10.

the perfection of a supreme Being than to the Platonic God-architect or matter-shaper.

The teleological arguments of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle had a great effect upon the popular belief of their contemporaries. Just as the ethical teachings of Socrates were a death-knell to the fallacies and caviling of the sophists, so was also the teleological argumentation of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle a severe blow to the atomistic theory, according to which blind force, the concurrence of atoms and the fortunate chance had, in a long series of combinations, brought about all the phenomena of the universe.

The teleological arguments of Socrates and Plato were to carry the monotheistic conviction into the minds of the Greeks.

The atomistic theory is nothing but an absurdity. Granted that the improbable event should have happened and a fortunate chance should have brought about some reasonable effects, would it not be utterly absurd to think that the endless variety of wonderful phenomena and of reasonable effects owes its existence to a fortunate chance? And would it not be equally absurd to think that mere chance and blind force can keep and sustain the world in such an order and harmony as it really is?

The atomistic hypothesis of Democrit, Lucretius, Holbach, Diderot and others, has been disowned and declared absurd by the representatives of the modern school of atomists. Its greatest authority, Professor Fechner, maintains: "The atoms themselves do not contain anything of space, time, law and spirit, nor can they produce anything of this kind; but they owe their existence to their relation to and connection with the Eternal Mind, and by means of this relation and connection they form existences. * * * Our theory

of atoms explaining the formation of the phenomena does not hinder us from assuming an absolute Being, whose essence is the oneness, combining and connecting all. This *ens realissimum* is no idle fancy, but it is the ground of all real being. Above all changeable causes there must be an eternal, unchangeable cause; above all dead rules and laws there must be a pulse of life; above all finite aims there must be an ultimate, eternal, highest aim." *

The same opinion is also entertained by Dr. Lotze, another great representative of the modern school of atomists.

The atomists of old, as a matter of course, have disputed that there is a design in nature; nay, the Roman poet, Lucretius, advanced the opinion that the theory of final causes inverts the order of causes and effects, so that the effects are taken for the causes and *vice versa*. His words read: "But before all, be on your guard against too common an error—believe not that the shining orb of our eyes has only been created to procure for us the sight of objects; that these legs and these movable thighs have only been reared on the basis of the feet to give greater extent to our paces; that the arms, in fine, have only been formed of solid muscle and terminated by the right and left hands, to be ministers of our want and of our preservation. By such interpretation the respective order of effects and causes has been reversed. Our members have not been made for our use, but we have made use of them because we have found them made. Sight did not precede the eyes; the words were not formed before the tongue—on the contrary, language followed long after the origin

* Die Physikalische Atomenlehre., 64, 166.

of that organ; the ears existed long before sound was heard, and all our members long before we made use of them." *

This theory of Lucretius is, in principle, the same as that of the modern materialists, who, like Dr. Buechner (*Gottesbegriff*, page 25), say: "The stag has not long legs in order to run fast, but he runs fast because he has long legs; or, as others say, the ducks have not palmated feet in order to swim, but they swim because they have palmated feet."

All these views do not prove anything against the design proper in nature. The truth is the eyes see, the legs walk, the hands work, the palmipeds swim, because it is the immanent finality of these organs and because it is their natural function. Consequently, man does not speak because he has invented language, but because speaking is the natural function of the respective organs. Every organ has its end in itself, though with regard to the whole it is often only a means. This is the idea of the eternal design, or the immanent finality.

Intervals between the origin of the organs and their functions, are no ends in themselves, but they are the occasions and the states necessary for the qualification of the organs for their functions. Had the creatures arisen of themselves, the materialists would be right in asserting that the organs of their bodies can make only that use of themselves which their inherent faculty incidentally allows; but being created by a supreme Intelligence, there is a design inherent in them, and that design is manifested in their natural function.

Notable are the views of Baron de Verulam on the final

* *De Rerum Natura*, 324.

causes. They are memorable, not merely because he is the father of the experimental and inductive methods prevalent in modern physical sciences, but because he has been misrepresented by a great many as having denied the finality in nature.

Bacon approved of the classification into four kinds of causes—the material, the efficient, the formal and the final, made by Aristotle—but he was opposed to the substitution of the final for the efficient causes and to the false notion arising from it, which he styled “the idols of the tribe.” *

Bacon does not deny the existence of final causes in nature; he only compares them to “vestal virgins, not productive indeed but dedicated to God.” *Causarum finalium sterilis est et tanquam virgo Deo consecrata nihil parit.* He meant to say they ought to be excluded from the study of physical sciences, and to be assigned a place in metaphysics. The reason he had was that, the study of final causes in physics diverts the attention from the efficient causes, to the great disadvantage of natural science. †

The office of natural science is the investigation of the phenomena of nature in all their relations and constituents; but this, he thought, could be done thoroughly only in the light of efficient and physical causes.

Dr. William Whewell, the author of the masterwork, “History of the Inductive Sciences,” is more competent than Bacon was to decide whether the study of final causes is really disadvantageous to the study of physical sciences. His opinion is that the study of final causes is not only *not disadvantageous to natural sciences*, but that, on the contrary,

* Novum Organum, II., 2; I., 39–45.

† De Aug. Scientiarum, III., 4.

"almost all great discoveries which have been made in physiology have been made by the assumption of a purpose in animal structures.*

Of the same opinion is also Professor Dr. Noah Porter. " * * * Final cause is so far from being barren that she deserves to be honored the *Alma Mater* of the inductive philosophy itself."† In corroboration of this assertion, Professor Porter furnishes evidences from mathematics, psychology, geology, paleontology, anthropology, ethics, etc.

Descartes, though he did not deny the existence of design in nature, did not approve of Bacon's view to relegate the study of final causes to the domain of metaphysics; and he opposed the study of the design altogether, for two reasons: In the first place, man is not competent to find out exactly what the real design is; and secondly, the study of final causes leads man to the anthropocentric view, considering himself the end of the whole creation.‡

But Descartes qualified his opinion when the semi-materialist Gassendi,|| with reference to instances like the wonderful arrangement of the valves of the heart, confronted him with a dilemma either to admit that there is finality in nature recognizable, or to declare frankly that there is no Providence.

Boyle wrote to Descartes: "Suppose that a peasant, entering in broad daylight the garden of a famous mathematician, finds there one of those gnomonic instruments which indicate the position of the sun in the Zodiac, its declination from the equator, the day of the month, the length of the day, etc.; it would no doubt be a great pre-

* Volume II. † Human Intellect, § 618. ‡ Princip., III., 2; Med., IV.

|| Objections a la 4th Medita.

sumption on his part, ignorant alike of mathematical science and of the intentions of the artist, to believe himself capable of discovering all the ends in view, for which this machine, so curiously wrought, has been constructed; but when he remarks that it is furnished with an index, with lines and honorary numbers—in short, with all that constitutes a sun-dial, and sees the shadow of the index mark in succession the hours of the day, there would be on his part as little presumption as error in concluding that this instrument, whatever may be its other uses, is certainly a dial, made to show the hours.”

The first of the modern metaphysicians who denied decidedly and entirely the finality in nature, was Benedict Spinoza. He approved fully of all the objections raised against the design theory by the Roman poet, Lucretius but he did not deny, as the atomists did, the existence of a first cause.

With stern logic his negation of the finality in nature followed from his system, according to which all that exists has to exist by the necessity of the nature of God, from which it issues, irrespective of the effects, whether beneficial or noxious.

Spinoza's system deals only with causes, but not with ends, and especially not with well-reasoned ends, as God, the cause of all, is, according to Spinoza, no free Being, but a substance, producing all by the necessity of its nature—*ex necessitate naturæ*.

A refutation of Spinoza's negation of finality presupposes a refutation of his whole substance-theory. His denial of the design-theory gave an impulse to the study of teleology, which, since the days of Spinoza down to the beginning of the present century, was a paramount subject of inquiry in the school of the English deists.

Edward Herbert, John Tolant, Anthony Collins, Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, Pope, and others, held that the goodness, wisdom and power manifested in nature were irrefutable evidences of the existence of a Supreme Being.

Unlike the orthodox theologians, who saw the finger of God especially manifested in the perturbations of nature, in the appalling events of history and in the deficiencies of human life, the English deists revered, on the contrary, the finger of God in the great harmony, order and wisdom displayed everywhere in nature.

This tendency of the deists was productive of excellent works on natural theology, tracing the vestiges of a design in the construction of the creatures, the adaptation of the parts to the whole, and in the provision for the existence and regeneration of the organized beings. Among the best deistical writers on teleology of that epoch were Henry More, Ralph Cudworth, Robert Boyle, John Ray, Nehemiah Green, William Derham, and others.

Spinoza's disteleology agitated also the German scholars. Christian Wolf and Herman Samuel Reimarus wrote excellent works on the design in nature.

Of no little interest is Voltaire's article, "Causes Finales," in his "Dictionair Philosophique." Like all deists, Voltaire was a decided finalist. As the infallible criterion of the real end for which a cause acts is the taking place of that effect at all times and in all places (*Pour qu'on puisse s'assurer de la fin veritable pour laquelle une cause agit, il faut que cet effet soit de tous les temps et de tous les lieux*)—for instance: It can not be said that the ocean has been made for vessels, for there have not been vessels at all times and on all seas—it would be ridiculous to think that nature had had in view, from the earliest times, the adjusting itself to our inventions, which are only of a later

date. It is very evident that if noses have not been made to bear spectacles, they have been made for smelling; and it is equally evident that there have been noses ever since there have been men. It is also evident that man's hands were not designed merely to wear gloves; they are designed to do all that their joints, muscles, forms and forces enable them to do.

In the examinations of the metaphysics of Sir Isaac Newton and M. Leibnitz, Voltaire, in the course of his argumentation for the intelligent personality of the Deity, says, with respect to Newton's proof of the Divine existence: "Sir Isaac's philosophy necessarily leads to the knowledge of a Supreme Being, who has created and disposed everything freely. For if, according to him, and indeed according to the reason of things, the world is finite: if there is a vacuum, matter does not then exist; and, if so, it must receive its existence from a free cause. If matter gravitates, as it has been plainly demonstrated that it does, it does not gravitate by its own nature, and must, therefore, have received its gravitation from God. If the planets move in one direction rather than in another, in an unresisting space, the hand of the Creator has then ordered their courses in this direction with an absolute freedom.*

When the French mathematician and natural philosopher, Moreau Maupertius, dared, in his "*Essai de Cosmologie*" (1751), to dispute Newton's eutaxiological and teleological views, and would prove the existence of God by the oblateness of the spheroidal form of the earth and by the motion of the matter, which must be caused by a motor, Voltaire ridiculed him and made him smart under the most unmerciful lashes of his sarcasm.

* Voltaire, *Ouvres*, Vol. 13.

Regarding the attempt of Maupertius to disprove the teleology and eutaxiology of Isaac Newton, Professor L. E. Hicks thinks: "Maupertius' criticisms simply show that he did not comprehend. He thought that Newton claimed a uniformity of animal structure throughout, and so away he goes on a false scent, comparing an eagle with a fly, a stag with a snail, etc., to overthrow the idea of uniformity." *

A new phase in the history of the teleological argument commenced with the great metaphysician, Emanuel Kant. His work, "The Structure of the Universe and the Theory of Heavens," published 1755, treats on the nebular theory in the manner in which it was promulgated at the same time by La Place in France. Kant contested, in the book mentioned, the orthodox view that the design was the work of any exterior forces or of a being that interceded in a miraculous manner. He expressed the idea that the universe developed, evolved and perfected itself by means of a principle operating from within, inherent in the matter. He says: "One obtains a higher idea of the Divine activity if one considers nature an orderly whole, producing by means of its own laws all that is beautiful and to a purpose, than if one thinks that the general laws of nature are productive only of disorder, and that the design in nature must be derived from a miraculous intervention of God."

Kant speaks of teleology in a strain of high enthusiasm; and all that he, later (1781), in the "Critique of Pure Reason," could advance against the teleological proof was, that the vestiges of design in nature do not warrant the assumption that God is also the Creator of the world *er*

* Hicks' Critique of Design Arguments, 204-205.

nihilo; and that our finite experience does not warrant the assumption of God's being infinite and all-wise.

These two objections raised by Kant against the teleological argument do not concern the question proper at all. They have no direct connection with teleological proof and are, consequently, entirely out of place. Kant admits that logically it can be inferred only that God is the world-architect, but not the Creator. Well and good. Suppose God is only the world-architect, by what logic can it be inferred that on that account there can be no design in nature? Plato, although he did not believe in a creation *ex nihilo*, and was the first to advance the idea that God is merely the Architect who made the world of the matter which he did not create, was for all that a zealous defender of the teleological proof. While Socrates showed the evidences of design merely in man—the microcosmos—he, Plato, pointed to its evidences also in the siderial world—the macrocosmos.

Despite his attempt to disprove the teleological argument, Kant could not help speaking of it with respect, designating it a proof clear and most conformed to the common sense of mankind. Besides this, Kant considered this argument of great interest to the study of natural sciences, as it induces man to study nature to try to find the ends of the phenomena and their construction.

The ideas of Kant which mark a new phase in the history of teleology, were promulgated first in 1790 in the "Critique of the Faculty of Judgment." His object in writing this work, as he communicated in 1787 to his disciple, Reinhold, in a letter, was: "I am busy with writing a critique of the faculty of judgment, in which there is to be set forth an entirely new principle *a priori*. Man's mind has three faculties—that of cognition, of feeling, pleasure and of

desire. The faculties of cognition are treated of in the 'Critique of Pure Reason.' The faculties of desire I have discussed in the 'Critique of the Practical Reason.' The faculties of the feeling of pleasure I was also seeking to bring into a system, but it seemed to me at first an impossible thing till, in the course of my study, I was led in the right way and was prepared for the work. Now I distinguish three parts in philosophy—the theoretical, the practical and the teleological—each one of which is a way to arrive at truth, and has its own principles *a priori*. The teleological is the most neglected of them all." *

It is generally admitted that the "Critique of the Faculties of Judgment" is the best book that Kant has written. His preceding works manifest a giant intellect and a great philosophical genius; but for the disquisitions they contain, he found the material in the works of his predecessors, while "the Critique of the Faculty of Judgment" is in every respect an original work. He conceived not only the very idea of it, but he had also to espy the material and to devise the terms used in it. This is also the reason why this book is so extremely abstruse, and why it is so difficult to comprehend the sense of so many passages.

The main object of the "Critique of the Faculty of Judgment" was to investigate *whether* and to *what* extent there is *design* in nature conceivable and discernible.

Kant starts with the *a priori* conception that there is in nature a supersensuous oneness, the ground and the reality of the diversity of natural phenomena, and the principle embracing and permeating them all.

The supersensible oneness is specified in the natural laws,

* Briefe, XI., 86.

empirical forces and particular phenomena. The specifying act of that oneness is called the "law of specification," and it is merely through this law that man can form a conception of the phenomena. Without it, the Proteus-like nature would be like fleeting clouds without any phenomena of constant forms and distinct character, unfit to be systematized and grouped into species or subjected to rules.

In our age all possible attention is given to the *variation of species*, and it is only too often forgotten that there is *constancy of species*, of which Alexander von Humboldt says: "The potatoes which grow in Chili 11,000 feet above the level of the sea, have the same kind of blossoms as those have which are raised in the plains of Siberia. The barley with which the horses of the Artides were fed, was of the same kind we are harvesting. The ibis-gourd in the Egyptian catacombs, among the snakes and insect mummies, and which is, perhaps, older than the pyramids, is of the species existing at present on the banks of the Egyptian rivers." *

The "law of specification" acts fortuitously in its formations. There is no reason known to man why there are, for instance, just certain trees and why they have just that form and not another one. But the "law of the constancy of species" shows a conformity to rules, otherwise no species could exist.

This shows that every phenomenon has a relation to the universal, general rule, which again, being the ground and the reality of that phenomenon, must be considered its finality. In other words, the conformity of products to the "law of constancy of species," brought about acci-

* Apelt, Die Epochen der Geschich. d. Menschheit.

mentally by the "law of specification," is what must be considered as a design in nature.

Among the formations and products of nature there are so many which seem to have been purposely adapted to make a good effect upon our faculty of judgment. This good effect is a feeling of pleasure, which was singled out by Kant as a way to arrive at the cognition of the real designs. This theory of the feelings of pleasure has nothing in common with the theoretical or the practical reason. It is called by Kant the *æsthetical taste* or the *faculty of judgment*.

Kant assumes a two-fold faculty of judgment: the æsthetic faculty or the subjective explanation, and the téléological faculty or the objective explanation.

A subject will, before we have yet formed a right conception of it, impress us delightfully or painfully. This is the æsthetical faculty of judgment, and shows that the forms of the objects are adapted to the æsthetical judgment of man. Nature must control his cognitive faculties.

The teleological faculty means the capability of man to ascertain that there is design in the form of an object. This subjective design is again subdivided into an external and internal finality.

The external design means the usefulness or fitness of one subject for another one. For instance, the fitness of certain kinds of food for certain species of animals, or the fitness of certain soils for certain kinds of plants. This kind of design is external, because it is not the end in itself, but is merely instrumental to adaptation and conformity.

The internal design, or the immanent finality, means the design in the parts of the organized beings. The organic products of nature are so constituted that every part of the organism exists for its own sake and has its end in itself.

Often its end is to serve also the whole, and then it may be the end and the means simultaneously.

The organized products of nature do not possess, like a machine, only moving power, but they are distinguished by the formative or organizing power assimilating all they take in from the outside world; by the reproductive power perpetuating the kind, and the reparative power, by means of which nature, being the physician, helps itself.

The external design may be explained by mechanical and physical causes, but the eternal design never. The eternal design, or the immanent finality, being a natural organization, can be explained only teleologically, that is to say, it is under the guidance of the principle of final causes.

This theory of an internal finality, being a real law of nature and not merely a subjunctive view, does not exclude the existence of an ultimate cause, but it presupposes it. Kant called this cause the *intellectus archetypus*, which knows the whole by way of intuition, and has not to start, like man, in a discursive way, from parts, advancing gradually to the cognition of the whole.

The theory of an "internal finality," some think, is not compatible with the view of a transcendental cause. They are mistaken in so thinking. The terms *transcendence* and *immanence* are opposites only to a certain degree, but not totally. The idea of a cause, above and distinct from nature, does not exclude the notion of a cause immanent at the same time in nature; nor does the doctrine that nature is endowed with internal activity and that it works with design, contain anything that was exclusive of a supermundane cause.

The theory of transcendence implies something of immanence, and the theory of immanence contains vestiges of

transcendence, so that God, the Supreme Cause, can well be conceived at once, outside of nature.

The Bible itself teaches that God is above and distinct from nature, and at the same time it teaches that he is present in all, knowing all, working through all and connected with all.

Even the pantheists, who identify God and nature—the causes and the effects, the noumen and the phenomena—make a distinction between the things and individuals, and their causes and reasons.

The cause of the individuals is not in them, but in the species, which always remain, though the individuals pass away; and again, the cause of the species is the archetype, constituting the animal and vegetable kingdoms, and the cause of these archetypes must be sought in the idea of life.

Having set forth, with all the force and cogency of his logic, the theory of the internal finality, Kant made the surprising remark that there is no way of proving that the design in nature was produced intentionally. A more gifted mind than man's, which would not necessarily have to investigate into nature, by a discursive way, proceeding from parts to the comprehension of the whole, but which, by way of intuition, would know the phenomena of the world in all their relation and succession, might find that nature, or the *intellectus archetypus*, was not guided by a design in the formation and production of the phenomena.

This opinion of Kant, presenting the internal finality of nature as a mere subjective view of the human mind, must be taken as his personal view, and is a hypothesis contrary to the facts and evidences he advanced in support of the internal finality.

The internal design theory is indisputably established and proved as a law of nature, and, consequently, it pre-

supposes a designer. When the existence of a design is proved, the inference of the existence of a designer is inevitable. Kant did not draw this inference, because, in so doing, he would have given up his consistency in the appliance of a principle which forms the main peculiarity of his criticism, referring all and everything to the consciousness of man.

Until Kant, it was generally believed that cognition was dependent upon the subjects and phenomena of the world, but he was the first to hold just the reverse, that the cognition was dependent upon the mode of human thought.

This theory of his own he applied to the fullest extent in his "Critique of Pure Reason," where he makes the cognition dependent upon the categories of the human mind.

Now, for consistency's sake, and to establish that theory of his own by as many cases as he thought fit, he, at the end of his philosophical researches, and in contradiction to facts and evidences he had previously advanced, assumed that the "design in nature" was only a mode of the human mind.

This hypothesis of Kant was contested by the great philosopher, Herbart, a very decided advocate of the validity of the teleological argument. If, says Herbart, finality in nature was nothing else but a mere necessary sense-intuition, for instance, like space and time, then it would also be applicable to all things as it is with time and space.

This is not the case. Besides that, if the finality is merely the sense of necessary convenience of the arrangement of nature, then why is it made evident only in certain cases? Why not in all cases? Why can we not account by it for many a mechanical regularity? Why does that mode of

mind not also guide us reliably in the field of mechanics and technics? *

Herbart's criticism of Kant's hypothesis of the subjectivity of design, was resumed and continued by the modern Aristotelian, Friedrich Adolph Trendelenburg.† His criticism is, in essence, as follows: Kant's reasoning was wrong in believing that nothing that is subjective could also be objective, and *vice versa*. Kant thought the finality was necessary, in order to reduce the phenomena to rules; but if the finality was merely of a subjective character, then it is the reverse of the efficient causes, and must be a source of confusion and distortion of realities.

The theory of the internal finality of Kant was resumed and developed by Hegel, whose teachings regarding it were reduced, by Professor Janet‡ and by Dr. I. S. Diman,§ to the three fundamental points:

1. "There are final causes in nature, and not only so, but the final cause is the sole veritable cause, for it alone has in itself the reason of its own determination. The domain of efficient causes is simply that of blind necessity.

2. "It is not, however, necessary to conceive the final cause in the form which it assumes in human consciousness, that is, an anticipated representation of the end. There are two ways of attaining an end—one voluntary and the result of conscious choice, like that in man; the other rational but unconscious, the activity of nature.

3. "The finality of nature is immanent and internal where the cause, the means and the end are simply three terms of

* Einleitung in die Philosop., Sect. 132.

† Logische Untersuchungen, p. 47.

‡ Final Causes, 334-335. § The Theistic Argument, 210.

one process, the cause attaining its end, without going out of itself, by self-development. In nature all is united in the same principle—the end realizes itself. The cause attains its end by self-development. The image of this development is in the seed that contains the whole being that it was to realize. It attains its end without going outside itself. It may be said of entire nature what Kant said of the organized beings, that in it everything is reciprocally end and means. Internal finality thus becomes immanent finality.”

Hegel was opposed to all frivolous criticism passed on the proofs of the Divine existence in the name of enlightenment, as these proofs and their history show the course of elevation and progress toward God which the human mind took.

Hegel made the Kantian “internal finality” instrumental in refuting Kant’s view that the design in nature warrants only the assumption of a world-architect, but not a creator of the world *ex nihilo*. Hegel argued: “If God was a mere world-architect, then the matter he had to shape was ‘dead matter.’ Such ‘dead matter’ is not imaginable, as it would be a matter without the properties of matter constituting it. These properties come directly from God, who permeates and encompasses all.”* God is, consequently, not merely the shaper, but at the same time the creator of the world.

To the theory of the immanent finality, Hegel added the doctrine of an unconscious finality, which achieves in nature definite ends without any conscious choice of purposes; that is the case, for instance, in the animal instinct of bears, beavers, etc.

* Vorlesungen ueber die Philos. d. Relig., II., pp. 29, 30, 1832.

Hegel's "unconscious finality" does not involve the negation of an intelligent creator. It is only a mode of final activity side by side of the conscious purpose.

This Hegelian theory of the unconscious finality was applied by Schopenhauer to the rise and formation of all phenomena, to the entire exclusion of the conscious purpose. His "will theory" is an unconscious finality.

Eduard von Hartman combined the "will theory" of Schopenhauer with the "logical idea" of Hegel, and maintained that the will and the intelligence, constituting the substance of all that exists, and being two sides of one and the same thing, co-operate in nature in an unconscious way. The whole philosophy of the unconscious finality is nothing but a system of one-sidedness, derived from the unconscious finality, which Hegel co-ordinated to the immanent finality of Kant.

In the "Critique of the Faculty of Judgment" (Sec. 75), Kant makes the remark: "It is quite sure that it is impossible to explain organized beings and their internal faculties in the light of the mechanical theory. Boldly and with equal certainty it may be maintained that it is absurd to hope a new Newton will one day be able to explain the production of a blade of grass by natural laws, over which no design has presided. Such a knowledge must absolutely be denied to man." Modern monists, like Professor Kirchman and others, think that Kant was grossly mistaken, and that Darwin is that new Newton who explained the existence of organized beings by mere mechanical principles of nature.

Those who have compared the real "evolution idea" of Darwin with the "internal finality" of Kant and also with the "immanent finality" of Hegel, will find that all these theories mean essentially the same, and that Darwinism,

just on that account, can not be pronounced an atheistic view.

It is decidedly false to hold that the Darwinian theory was incompatible with design in nature; or that the Darwinian teachings had eliminated once for all every objective basis of teleology.

Darwinism is, generally speaking, to the present day nothing but a hypothesis, all assertions of its enthusiastic votaries to the contrary notwithstanding. Darwinism is to the present day so much a hypothesis that despite all that has been said and written in its behalf the following remarks of the American poet, William Cullen Bryant, deserve consideration: "But allowing all that Darwin says of the consanguinity of man and of the inferior animals, admitting that we are of the same flesh and blood as the baboon and the rat, where does he find his proof that we are improving instead of degenerating? He claims that man is an improved monkey; how does he know that the monkey is not a degenerated man, a decayed branch of the human family, fallen away from the high rank he once held, and haunted by a dim sentiment of his lost dignity, as we may infer from his melancholy aspect? Improvement implies effort: it is up-hill work; degeneracy is easy: it asks only neglect, indolence, inaction. How often do the descendants of illustrious men become the most stupid of the human race! How many are there, each of whom we may call 'The tenth transmitter of a foolish face!' and that face growing more and more foolish from generation to generation. I might instance the Bourbon family, lately reigning in Spain and Naples. I might instance the royal family of Austria. There is a whole nation, millions upon millions—our Chinese neighbors—of whom the better opinion is that

they have been going backward in civilization from century to century.”*

But suppose Darwinism was no hypothesis. Suppose, for argument's sake, that it was a universal, conclusive, matter-of-fact theory, why should it then be incompatible with design, and why should it then exclude final cause?

Darwinism is a system of principles, and as such, whether of a progressive or degenerating tendency, it implies a method, a plan, and consequently a design. Darwinism is evolution; evolution is development; development is a tendency to an end; and that is exactly what finality means.

“Darwinian Evolution,” says Prof. Asa Gray, the greatest Darwinist in America, “is neither theistical nor non-theistical. Its relations to the question of design belong to the natural theologian; or, in a larger sense, to the philosopher. So long as the world lasts it will probably be open to any one to hold consistently, in the last resort, either of the two hypotheses, that of a divine mind or that of no divine mind. There is no way that we know of by which the alternative may be excluded. Viewed philosophically, the question only is, which is the better supposed hypothesis of the two?” * * * “Darwin's theory concerns the *order* and not the *cause*, the *how* and not the *why* of the phenomena, and so leaves the question of design just where it was before.”†

Darwin himself did not contest the teleological view. His own words read: “I see no good reason why the views given in this volume should shock the religious feelings of any one. It is satisfactory as showing how transient such impressions are, to remember that the greatest discovery ever made by man, namely, the law of attraction, of gravity,

* Prose Writings, Volume II., pp. 292, 1884.

† Gray's Darwiniana, pp. 379, 149.

was also attacked by Liebnitz, as subversive of natural, and, inferentially, of revealed religion. A celebrated author and divine has written to me that he has gradually learned to see that it is just as noble a conception of the Deity to believe that he created a few original forms, capable of self-development into other and needful forms, as to believe that he required a fresh act of creation to supply the voids caused by the creation of his laws.”*

In treating the question as to the origin of species and individuals, Darwin, in the “Descent of Man,” remarks: “The birth, both of the species and of the individual, are equally parts of that grand sequence of events which our minds refuse to accept as the result of blind chance.”

It has been said that Darwin’s remarks on the religious question are too general and sometimes also somewhat contradictory. That may be so, but Darwin, restricting himself scrupulously to the investigation of nature, did not consider it his business to give his opinion on religious subjects. Besides this, he might have feared that religious utterance would embroil him in controversies incurring hostility and depriving him of the time he preferred to devote to the study of natural sciences.

The fact that Darwin did not utter in all his works anything against religion, marks him as a naturalist, conscious of the boundaries of religion and physical science, and also as a man convinced that a harmony between religion and physical sciences is possible.

If his utterances concerning religion seem sometimes somewhat contradictory, it must be regarded that he expressed them under momentary impressions as a naturalist,

* *Origin of Species*, pp. 421.

without having contemplated to furnish the world with materials for a compact system of cogent religious truths.

Darwin was a naturalist who scrupulously abstained from acting the role of a theologian or philosopher.

The German Professors, Albert Wiegand and K. E. von Baer, contest the Darwinism selection theory merely from a scientific point of view, but they do not consider it a theory incompatible with religion.

Much has been said and written about the elimination of the design theory in nature by means of the physical sciences. If, as it is claimed by the materialists, the design theory was disproved, then why do they not give up entirely the idea of all that sounds like it, as obsolete? Why do modern monists, like Hæckel and Baer, torture their minds in devising new terms for a principle which is to substitute the old design terminology?

The Professor K. E. Baer substituted the term *design* with "Zielstrebigkeit" (aim). This shows that even the opponents of the design theory can not help admitting there is in nature a principle that is higher than mere mechanical force. But there is so much confusion regarding this point, that while Professor Karl Ernst von Baer thought he had done something great for science in having given expression to a progressive scientific idea by his proposal to substitute "Zielstrebigkeit" (aim) for "Zweckmässigkeit" (design), there came another great German Professor, Dr. Emil Du Bois-Reymond, and says he can not see any advantage or merit in Baer's proposed term.*

This shows clearly that even the opponents of the design theory can not help admitting that there is in nature some principle higher than mere mechanical force, and it is per-

* Reymond's Darwin Versus Gallani.

fectly true when Dr. Noah Porter, President of the Yale College, says: "We have already seen that the belief in the laws of nature, in regularity of their action, or the mutual and study adjustment of one force to another, is but another form of assenting to the truth that design and thought are supreme. The circumstance that scientific men often stop short with these laws, without asking themselves what the belief in laws imply, proves nothing except that they are so occupied with a special line of inquiry as to leave little leisure or occasion to inquire whether a purpose underlies law. The exclusiveness of their occupation, with the very concentration of their inquiries within these limits, and the current religious belief which connects nature's laws with the Supreme Being whom they worship, render superfluous any speculative thought upon the import of designs of nature. Now and then it happens that a very able and truth-loving student forgets, in the fervor of his faith in law, that any inquiry in respect to the grounds of this faith is required or admits of a rational answer. Others confound laws with forces, personify the confused conceptions of both, and assume a position of contemptuous defiance toward any thinker who asks them to give a reason for their faith in these abstractions. Notwithstanding all this, the fact remains true that modern science has myriads or more occasions to believe that nature is palpitating with thought than had ancient or modern common sense or ancient science. We observe, in conclusion, that the truth that design controls the universe alone furnishes science with a satisfactory conception of nature, of man and of God. If man assumes too much in finding design in nature, then, by the same rule, he assumes too much in finding anything in nature, force or law—nay, even finding in it number and

geometry. To deny design in nature because it is anthropomorphous, requires us to deny force and law as well.”*

The wonderful construction of the human eye has always been considered as the most conclusive evidence of a design, and such a one it indeed is ; but of late Professor Helmholtz tried to demonstrate that from an optical point of view the eye ought to have been more perfect, and that, as an apparatus, it is full of imperfections and defects. Professor Helmholtz may be right, that the eye has many imperfections and that there are optical instruments which, as works of industry and art, are of more precision, but that does not make the eye a less conclusive evidence of the final causes in nature. As long as the eye responds to its purposes in practical life and is appropriated to its optical uses, it shows a design, no matter what its imperfections may be in the light of the modern progress of optical science. And this is, in fact, all that theology regards and is interested in.

It has been a favorite idea of the French deists to demonstrate the design theory by means of the analogy of a watch. The famous watch illustration of William Paley reads as follows : “ In crossing a heath, suppose I pitched my foot against a stone and were asked how the stone came to be there, I might possibly answer that, for anything I knew to the contrary, it had lain there forever : nor would it, perhaps, be very easy to show the absurdity of this answer. But suppose I had found a watch upon the ground, and it should be inquired how that watch happened to be in that place, I should hardly think of the answer which I had before given, that, for anything I knew, the watch had always been there. Yet why should that answer not serve for the watch as well as for the stone? Why is it not admissible in

* Science and Sentiment, pp. 284, 285, 287.

the second case as in the first? For this reason, and no other, when we come to inspect the watch we perceive—what we could not discover in the stone—that its several parts are framed and put together for purpose; that they are framed and so adjusted as to produce motion, and that motion so regulated as to point out the hour of the day; that if different parts had been differently shaped and of a different size, or placed after any other manner, either no motion at all would have been carried on, or none which would have answered the use that is now served by it. * * * This mechanism being observed, the inference, we think, is inevitable that the watch had a maker; that there must have existed at some time and at some place an artificer or artificers who formed it for the purpose for which we find it actually to answer, who comprehended its construction and designed its use. * * * Man would be surprised to hear that the mechanism of the watch was no proof of contrivance, only a motive to induce the mind to think so; that the watch was anything more than the result of the laws of metallic nature, in exclusion of agency and power.” *

In this way Paley continues his illustration to show that the wonderful construction of the world presupposes a designer. Much praise was bestowed upon Paley for the masterly and elaborate manner in which he applied this illustration.

This was a too favorite analogy to be overlooked by the antagonists of teleology.

Professor Huxley was the first who attempted to prove that the demonstration of design by the analogy of a watch, referred to so often by the English and French deists, was

resting merely upon a fallacy, and he argued against Paley as follows :

“ In Paley’s famous illustration, the adaptation of all parts of the watch to the function or purpose of showing the time, is held to be evidence that the watch was especially contrived to that end, on the ground that the only cause we know of, competent to produce such an effect as a watch, shall keep time, is contriving intelligence and adapting the means exactly to that end. Suppose, however, that only one had been able to show that the watch had not been made directly by any person, but that it was the result of the modification of another watch which kept time but poorly, and that this again has proceeded from a structure which could hardly be called a watch at all, seeing that it had no figures on the dial and the hands were rudimentary, and that going back and back in time we come at last to a revolving barrel as the earliest traceable rudiment of the whole fabric. And imagine that it had been possible to show that all these changes had resulted, first, from a tendency of the structure to vary indefinitely, and, secondly, from something in the surrounding world which helped all variations in the direction of an accurate time-keeper and checked all those in other directions, then it is obvious that the force of Paley’s argument is gone.” *

The argumentation of Mr. Huxley is fallacious. It does not refute Paley at all, because it ignores the primary cause and the evolutionary principle working from within, and accounts for the existence of subjects in discussion with physical efficient causes and with mere mechanical forces.

Whether the world or, by way of illustration and analogy, the watch, or any other piece of workmanship, is considered

* Lay Sermons, XIII., pp. 301, 302.

a work or a product; whether it arose by a fiat or by a gradual evolutionary process; whether it counts its ages by thousands or by millions of years, is of no consideration so far as the existence of a supreme, intelligent Cause is concerned. All this concerns only the mode of the production of the world, but can by no logic in the world affect the belief in the existence of an ultimate cause, from which the all is originating. There must be a presiding Intelligence. If the design displayed in the laws of optics and acoustics, in the properties of the elements, in the geometrical relations and algebraical calculations of the planetary systems, in the laws making zoology, botany, psychology, meteorology, etc., sciences, arose of itself, then why can not order, regularity, geometrical relations, algebraical calculations, technical works, etc., also arise of themselves in the sphere of human activity?

Until this will be the case, the design theory as illustrated by Paley's watch and as displayed in the adaptation and adjustment of means to purposes and of causes to effects, is irrefutable, and the argument for the existence of a God from the design in nature will remain valid, all that is said by materialists and atheists to the contrary notwithstanding.

“All nature is but art, unknown to thee;
All chance, direction which thou canst not see;
All discord, harmony not understood;
All partial evil, universal good;
And spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One truth is clear, whatever is, is right.”—POPE.

III. THE ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT.

“Intelligi necesse est, esse deos, quoniam insitas eorum vel potius innatas cognitiones habemus. De quo autem omnium natura consentit, id verum esse necesse est.” *

The cognition of the first principle, which is also fundamental and ultimate, is of the greatest importance, both from a metaphysical and ethical point of view.

If the first principle be a mere blind force, then the destination of man can be nothing higher than what the “prudent and smart men” please to make of him; however, if the first principle be a conscious Intelligence, then man is an image of that intelligence, and that intelligence is his ideal, and as such the guide of his conduct and aspiration.

The Ionian philosophers had in that question only a physical interest, and, in explanation of the problem of the world, they set up the material principles, air or water, or fire. From this rude view the Pythagoreans broke off and assumed that the numbers, remaining the same in all changes, were the essence of all things.

A real metaphysical interest in the problem of the first principle was taken first by the Eleatic school, represented by Xenophon, Parmenides and Zeno, who assumed that the “pure being” was the ultimate principle. The “pure

* Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, I., 17.

being" was to them the negation of all divisions in time and space, the rational unity implying all real substantiality and the oneness of thought and being. An ethical significance was attributed to that problem first by Socrates, the great Greek monotheist.

The Eleatic school, being a school of pantheism and monism, did nothing directly for the argumenation of the existence of God, but so much more indirectly. The argumentation of Xenophon, the one being necessarily infinite; of Parmenides, the non-existence being inconceivable; and of Zeno, that the manifoldness of phenomena as a modification of the necessarily indivisible and infinite being was without a real existence of its own, were a preparatory schooling for the later discussions of the *a priori* proof of the Divine existence.

The ontological argument is the proof *a priori* or from intuition. The father of the ontological argument is Anselm de Canterbury. From the very fact that man has an idea of God, he inferred the objectivity of the Divine existence.

Anselm argued that even the atheist can conceive a Being encompassing all and manifested in the perfection of all being, as the highest good and the most real perfection. If the conception of an absolutely greatest existed merely in the intellect of man, then there would be the possibility of conceiving something still greater, *actually* existing in the external world. A being, which is not merely in the intellect, but in the external reality of such a nature that no other one can be thought of as higher, more absolute and more perfect, is God. Being the most perfect, God can not be thought of otherwise than existing in reality.

In the second chapter of the Proslogion, Anselm sets forth: "It is not the same that the thing shall be in the intellect and that we should understand the thing to be. For when

a painter thinks beforehand of that which he is about to make, he has it indeed in his intellect, but he does not yet understand what he had not made. However, when he has painted it, he has it in the intellect and also understands what he has made. Therefore, even the fool when he says in his heart there is no God is convinced that there is in his intellect something, than which nothing greater can be conceived of; when he hears the term God he understands its meaning, and whatever is understood is in the intellect. But, assuredly that, of which nothing greater can be conceived, is in the intellect alone, for, if it is in the intellect alone, it may be conceived as being also in reality. If, therefore, that of which nothing greater can be conceived is in the intellect alone, that very thing than which nothing greater can be conceived, is where something greater can be conceived. But this is impossible. There exists, therefore, beyond doubt, something than which nothing greater can be conceived, both in the intellect and in reality." *

This argument, though indorsed by the high authority of Anselm, was not allowed to pass into the records of history without a close examination and strict criticism. A contemporaneous monk, Gaunilo, wrote a refutation, "*Liber Pro Insipiente*," setting forth that it was a folly to infer from the mere conception of a perfect supreme Being that such a Being also exists in reality. The conception of the absolutely greatest does not exist in man's intellect in any other sense than any other subject we know of; it was just as logical and rational to assert that a certain monster or mythological figure, or an island of unsurpassed beauty and

* *Medieval Philosophy*, by F. D. Maurice, p. 102.

treasures must exist, because man can give them an imaginary existence. Gaunilo's objection centered in the idea that necessary existence was one thing, and the idea of a necessary existence was another thing.

Gaunilo's refutation was not considered by Anselm as an invalidation of his argument, but it was rather hailed by him as a good opportunity to express himself a little plainer and more definite, and he did it in his "*Liber Apologeticus Adversus Respondentem Pro Insipiente*." Anselm admitted that not all that is imaginable must necessarily exist, yet it was different with the idea of God comprising the absolute good, the absolute truth and the absolute being. The conception of the absolutely greatest and most perfect (*præter quod majus cogitari non possit*) was above any comparison with any other conception, and on that account being an exception, he declared Gaunilo's counter-argumentation inapplicable and entirely out of place.

Anselm considered it a matter of impossibility to conceive of the non-existence of God, as God's existence was involved in the idea of the absolute being, of the absolute truth, of the absolute good, and of the absolute perfection.

Despite all the efforts of Anselm to prove the validity of the ontological argument, the great mediæval scholastics, like Gilbert de la Poire, Petrus Lombardus, Hugo de St. Victor, etc., did not take any notice of it. All the more attention was given to it by the modern metaphysicians.

Rene Descartes expressed the ontological argument in two modes.

The one mode, containing essentially the idea of Anselm, reads about thus: A supreme Being of absolute perfection is conceivable and, consequently, also possible. A primordial Being is necessary, because without its presupposition there is no reality possible. The supreme Being can be no other

than the primordial one, and from this it follows that a supreme Being is real.*

The second mode of the ontological argument, as expressed by Descartes,† is in essence as follows: All our ideas we derive either from without (*adventitiæ*) or we have produced them ourselves (*factitio*), or they are inborn in us (*insito* or *innato*). Now, the idea of God as the most perfect Being can not be derived from without, for God is no object of a sensuous apprehension; nor can it be produced by man himself, for the more perfection there is in an idea, the more perfection there must be in the cause that produces it. Man, a finite being, can not be the cause of the conception of the most perfect and infinite Being, consequently the idea of God must be innate in man and implanted in his mind by the Supreme Being himself.

By way of illustration, Descartes remarked: As in the idea of a triangle is involved the idea that its angles are equal to two right angles, so there is involved in the idea of God his necessary existence. The Frenchmen, Bossuet and Fenelon, treated the ontological argument of Descartes with all the brilliancy of which their pens were capable; and the great scholar, Leibnitz, added, in elucidation of the Cartesian theory that *universality* and *necessity* were the criteria of innate ideas.

The "God-intoxicated" Spinoza agreed with Descartes that the idea of God, which encompasses all reality, all truth and all perfection, must imply implicitly the Divine existence and is above comparison with any other idea.

Spinoza, though he saw God in everything, did not argue for the existence of God from the very reasoning of man or from the theory of innate ideas, nor from the conception of

* Principl. Philo., I., 3-50. † Principl. Philo., I., 18.

the finite world. He took no notice of all this. He took as a basis for his argumentation for the Divine existence his definition of God as the infinite, self-caused Being (*causa sui*). The following definition of God, he maintained, implied indisputably the Divine existence :

“God, or substance, consisting of infinite attributes, of which each expresses eternal and infinite essentiality, necessarily exists.” * In explanation of this proposition, Spinoza advanced the following two proofs :

“Proof: If this be denied, conceive, if possible, that God does not exist; then his essence does not involve existence. But this (by Prop. VII.) is absurd. Therefore, God necessarily exists.”

“Another proof: Of everything whatsoever, a cause or reason must be designed, either for its existence or for its non-existence—*e. g.*, if a triangle exists, a reason or cause must be granted for its existence; if, on the contrary, it does not exist, a cause must also be granted, which prevents it from existing, or annuls its existence. This reason or cause must either be contained in the nature of the thing in question or be external to it—for instance, the reason for the non-existence of a square circle is indicated in its nature, namely, because it would involve a contradiction. On the other hand, the existence of substance follows also solely from its nature, inasmuch as its nature involves existence. (Prop. VII.)

“But the reason for the existence of a triangle or a circle does not follow from the nature of those figures, but from the order of universal nature in extension. From the latter it must follow, either that a triangle necessarily exists or

* The Ethics, Proposition XI.

that it is impossible that it should exist. So much is self-evident. It follows, therefore, that a thing necessarily exists if no cause or reason be granted which prevents its existence.

“If, then, no cause or reason can be given which prevents the existence of God, or which destroys his existence, we must certainly conclude that he necessarily does exist. If such a reason or cause should be given, it must either be drawn from the very nature of God, or be external to him—that is, drawn from another substance of another nature. For, if it were of the same nature, God, by that very fact, would be admitted to exist. But substance of another nature could have nothing in common with God (Prop. II.), and therefore would be unable either to cause or destroy his existence.

“As, then, a reason or cause which would annul the Divine existence can not be drawn from anything external to the Divine nature, such cause must, perforce, if God does not exist, be drawn from God’s own nature, which would involve a contradiction. To make such an affirmation about a Being absolutely infinite and supremely perfect, is absurd; therefore, neither in the nature of God, nor externally to his nature, can a cause or reason be assigned which would annul his existence. Therefore, God necessarily exists.”

Regarding this proof from mere definition, his great friend, Henry Oldenburg, the first secretary of the Royal Society of England, asked him: “Do you clearly and indisputably understand, solely from the definition you have given of God, that such a Being exists? For my part, when I reflect that definitions contain only the conceptions formed by our minds, and that our mind forms many conceptions of things which do not exist, and is very fertile in multiplying and amplifying what it has conceived, I do not yet see that from

the conception I have of God I can infer God's existence. I am able by a mental combination of all the perfections I perceive in men, in animals, in vegetables, in minerals, etc., to conceive and form an idea of some single substance uniting in itself all such excellences; indeed, my mind is able to multiply and augment such excellences indefinitely; it may thus figure forth for itself a most perfect and excellent being, but there would be no reason thence to conclude that such a being actually exists." Upon this question, which materially contains the same idea that the monk Gaunilo raised in objection to the ontological argument of Anselm de Canterbury, Spinoza replied as follows: "Not from every definition does the existence of the thing defined follow, but only from the definition or idea of an attribute, that is, of a thing conceived through and in itself. The reason for this distinction was pointed out in the note to the three first propositions of the Ethics, sufficiently and clearly at any rate for a philosopher, who is assumed to be aware of the difference between a fiction and a clear and distinct idea, and also of the truth of the axiom that every definition or clear and distinct idea is true.*

The propositions, to which Spinoza refers, are based upon the following three definitions, with which his "Ethics" start and have about the same meaning:

"By that which is self caused (*causa sui*), I mean that of which the essence involves existence, or that of which the nature is only conceivable as existent

"A thing is called *finite after its kind*, when it can be limited by another thing of the same nature; for instance, a body is called finite because we always conceive another

* Spinoza's Correspondence, Letters III., IV., Bohn's English Edition.

greater body. So, also, a thought is limited by another thought ; but a body is not limited by thought nor a thought by a body.

“By substance I mean that which is in itself and is conceived through itself: in other words, that of which a conception can be formed independently of any other conception.”

The whole argumentation of Spinoza is centered upon the idea that the real perfection does not come from an external cause, but from the nature of the substance. The existence of such a perfect and infinite substance is its essentiality, and one can not be more certain of the existence of anything than of the existence of such a perfect and infinite substance or God.

Moses Mendelssohn approved of the ontological argument and has, in his “*Morgenstunden*,” attempted to refute all objections raised against the identification of the conception and of the reality of the Divine existence.

He did not believe that every conception which does not involve a logical or a metaphysical impossibility must exist, but like Anselm he thought that the conception of God, the absolute Being, was incomparable with any other concept and that it was, by reason of its nature, real.

The gist of Mendelssohn’s argument is: The Supreme Being must be considered independent, and the dilemma arises—either it does exist or it does not exist (*Tertium non datur*). If it does not exist, there must be some reason for its non-existence, and that reason must be either in it or outside of it. Outside it can not be, lest God would not be independent. Neither can it be in it, for, in the conception of a supreme, independent Being, there is no contradiction. There being no reason for the non-existence of God, neither

in God nor outside of God, it follows by necessity that He exists in reality.

One of the most interesting chapters of the Kantian philosophy is that which treats of the four antinomies.* The four theses are: The world has a beginning in time and space; every substance is composed of indivisible atoms; there is besides a mere physical causality in nature also a causality of free will; there is a necessary being.

The four antitheses are, as a matter of course, just the reverses of these theses.

The English philosopher, Hume, may be considered the representative of these antitheses, while Christian Wolf is the modern main-representative of the theses.

Kant took a special delight in showing that both these theses and these antitheses are right and are wrong. He showed that human reason has no means and no ways of settling these problems definitely.

Possessed and swayed entirely by this antinomic idea, Kant was bent on treating from such a standpoint the arguments for the existence of God.

As to the cosmological and teleological proofs, in favor of which the phenomena of nature speak so much, he admitted that there can be advanced at least just as many arguments *pro* as *con*, but, since the *ontological* argument was ignored and contested by a great many mediæval philosophers, Kant pronounced it the weakest of all arguments.

The main objection Kant raised against Anselm was that he had confounded the mere existence of predicates with the existence of an absolute Being, the bearer of all predicates and perfection.

The ontological proof was to Kant nothing more than the

* Critique of the Pure Reason, II., 2.

assumption of a *necessary existence*, where only the assumption of the *idea of a necessary existence* is in place.

Anselm and his followers considered the existence itself a predicate, and as such it was implied in the very conception of the Divine perfection.

Kant, however, remonstrated: the existence was no real predicate, but the mere position of a subject. For instance, the judgment that God is omnipotent contains two conceptions of an objective nature—God and omnipotence; the copula *is* does not express an additional predicate, but it expresses only what the predicate omnipotent affirms of the subject, God.

If one says God *is*, then this *is* does not confer upon or add to the conception of God a *new* predicate, but it only presents the conception of God with its predicate.

Without this position and presentation, the subject would contain the same predicates in the same way as "*one hundred real dollars do not contain more than one hundred possible dollars.*"

According to Kant, the contents of a conception is only that which is possible, while the being, the reality, are mere positions, presentations and modalities of the position of a subject for human comprehension.

If the existence were a predicate adding anything to the contents of the subject, then the mere conception of the subject would be deficient, incomplete and inadequate. Kant's argument is in essence as follows: When we say that such or such a possible subject does not exist, then it is either an analytical or a synthetic judgment. An analytical judgment is merely the full statement of what there is inclosed in the subject. Without adding or proving anything in this case, we give only the definition. A synthetic judgment adds something to the subject, and, in

this light, the existence of a God is not included in the mere conception of such a perfect Being. The real existence being the very opposite of the ideal existence, can not be in the latter, nor can it be inferred from the subject; it must rather be added. The real existence is something that is added to the mere idea of existence.

This argumentation of Kant was, without any special reference to him, pronounced by Moses Mendelssohn, in the last chapter of the "Morgenstunden," as absurd, on the ground that the very idea of a necessary being is nonsensical as long as existence is separated from it; and also on the ground that the consummation of all perfections and realities can not be imagined without the inclusion of existence.

Regarding existence, Mendelssohn makes a distinction between that which is contingent and that which is necessary. The former is unimaginable without existence, but not so the latter.

To the objection that people assume the existence of a Supreme Being because man can not imagine it otherwise, or because the existence of a Supreme Being is a mode of man's thought, Mendelssohn replies: Well for us that so much at least is admitted by our opponents, viz., that man can not help to think a Supreme Being is real. With this concession man will come to see that the Being which we can not help to think of is also existing. A subject that all men can not help thinking of must be true. They all agree upon it, and this is the criterion of its truth. This is the *argumentum a consensu gentium*.

Kant thought he had disproved definitely the ontological argument; but in that he was mistaken. Besides Moses Mendelssohn, there are four other great metaphysicians—

Hegel, Serbati, Cousin and Caird—who have resumed it again and have defended it as natural, sound and safe.

Hegel maintains that the ontological argument, if taken in the right light, is the only real proof of the existence of God. True it starts from a conception, which, being of a subjective nature, forms the opposite of the objective reality; but the conception of God as the absolute Being implies the existence of that Being. The conception and the existence of an absolute Being, God, can not be separated from one another, and, in contradistinction to all other conceptions and existences, they exceptionally are absolute and are no opposites. God is the consummation of all realities, one of which is the existence. Hegel, as he himself stated, has only repeated what Moses Mendelssohn advanced in refutation of Kant; but he also referred to Spinoza, who defined God as something that can not be conceived of without the reality of existence.

The Italian metaphysician, Antonio Rosmini Serbati (1797–1855), expressed the ontological argument in the following sense: I feel that the idea of an absolute Being is not a mere mode of human thought, but an incontrovertible reality. This feeling of an infinite Being can not be produced in me by any finite cause. It is the infinite, absolute and immutable cause that has implanted it in my mind. While the absolute Being is manifested to the intellect as the truth, it is manifested in nature as beauty and goodness, and in society it is revealed as justice and right. In nearly all essential manifestations of the things are the manifestations of that absolute and perfect Being termed God.

Serbati has combined the Greek idea of the absolute Being and Anselm's view of the Divine perfection together with the Cartesian theory of the intuitive or innate truths.

In the opinion of the French metaphysician, M. Cousin, "the idea of the infinite and perfect is as primitive and as given in the consciousness, and as necessary a product of reason, as the idea of the finite and imperfect. It is in our power to imagine the existence of a gorgon and centaur, and we can conceive their non-existence, but it is not in our power, when we have acquired a precise conception of the finite and the imperfect, not to conceive the infinite and perfect. This reasoning is no chimera; it is a rational necessity, an intuitive truth.

"* * * The idea of the infinite and the idea of the finite are logical correlatives; and in the order of their acquisition, that of the finite and imperfect precedes that of the infinite. But it scarcely precedes it; it is not possible for the mind as soon as consciousness furnishes the mind with the idea of the finite and imperfect, not to conceive the idea of the infinite and perfect. Now, the infinite and perfect is God." *

John Caird, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Glasgow, put an end to all the disputes about what the ontological proof can really mean. His opinion on the subject reads as follows:

"It is difficult, however, to conceive that an argument, of which the refutation seems so easy and obvious, could have imposed itself on thinkers, such as those above named, as on closer examination we shall find that imperfect as may be the form in which it has often been presented, the principle of this argument is that on which our whole religious consciousness may be said to rest.

"It is quite true that there are many things of which,

* Elements of Psychology, Henry's English Translation.

from the mere idea or conception of them in our minds, we can not infer the objective existence. If existence means, as in the case of Kant's dollars, the accidental existence of particular objects for sensuous perception, such an existence we can not infer from thought. It is, indeed, of the very nature of such things that, regarded simply in themselves, they either may or may not be; and to infer their necessary existence from the idea of them, would be in direct contradiction with that idea. But there are other ideas with respect to which this does not hold good; and there is, especially, one idea, which, whether we are explicitly or only implicitly conscious of it, so proves its reality from thought, that thought itself becomes impossible without it. Its objective, absolute reality is so fundamental to thought, that to doubt it implies the subversion of all thought and all existence alike.

“In a former chapter I attempted to point out the self-contradiction ultimately involved in materialistic theories of mind, viz.: that in making thought a function of matter, they virtually made thought a function of itself. In other words, they make that the product of matter which is involved in the very existence of matter, or which is prius of matter and of all other existences. Neither organization, nor anything else, can be conceived to have any existence which does not presuppose thought. To constitute the existence of the outward world, or of the lowest term of reality, we ascribe to it, say in ‘atoms’ or ‘molecules,’ or ‘centers of forces,’ you must think them or receive them as existing for thought—you must needs presuppose a consciousness, for which and in which all objective existence is. To go beyond or to attempt to conceive of an existence which is prior to and outside of thought ‘a thing of itself,’ of which thought is only the

mirror, is self-contradictory, inasmuch as that very thing in itself is only conceivable by, exists only for, thought. We must think it before we can ascribe to it even an existence outside of thought.

“ But while it is true that the priority of thought, or the ultimate unity of thought and being, is a principle, to doubt which is impossible, seeing that in doubt we are tacitly asserting the thing we doubt; yet it must be considered, further, that the unity thus asserted, when we examine what it means, is not the dependence of objective reality on my thoughts or yours, or on the thought of any individual mind. The individual mind which thinks the necessary priority of thought can also think non-necessity of its own thought. There was a time when we were not; and the world and all that is therein we can conceive to be as real, though we, and myriads such as we, no longer existed to perceive and know it. All that I think, all objective existence, is relative to thought in this sense that no object can be conceived as existing except in relation to a thinking subject. But it is not my thought in which I am shut up, or which makes or un-makes the world for me; for in thought I have the power of transcending my own individuality and the world of objects opposed to it, and of entering into an idea which unites or embraces both. Nay, the unity of subject and object of self and the world which is opposed to it, is implied in every act of thought; and though I can distinguish the two, I can no more divide them, or conceive of their separate and independent existence, than I can think of a center existing without or independently of a circumstance. In thinking myself, my own individual consciousness and an outward world of objects, I at the same time tacitly think or presuppose a higher, wider, more comprehensive thought or consciousness which embraces and is the unity of both.

“The real presupposed position of all knowledge, or the thought which is the price of all things, is not the individual, but a thought of self-consciousness which is beyond all individual selves and their objects, of all thinkers and of all objects thought. Or, to put it differently, when we are compelled to think of all existences as relative to thought, and of thought as prior to all, among the existences to which it is prior is our own individual self. We can make our individual self, just as much as other things, the object of thought. We can only think, but we can think the individual thinker. We might even say that, strictly speaking, it is not we that think but the *universal reason* that thinks in us. In other words, in thinking we rise to a universal point of view, from which our individuality is of no more account than the individuality of any other object. Hence, as thinking beings, we dwell already in a region in which our individual feelings and opinions, as such, have no absolute worth, but that which alone has absolute worth is a thought which does not pertain to us individually, but is the universal life of all intelligence, or the life of universal, absolute intelligence.

“What, then, we have thus reached as the true meaning of the ontological proof is this, that as spiritual beings our whole conscious life is based on a universal self-consciousness, an absolute spiritual life, which is not a mere subjective notion or conception, but which carries with it the proof of its necessary existence or reality.

“And now finally, if we consider what is involved in the idea of God, and of his relation to the world which we have reached as the true meaning of ontological argument, we shall find that we have here the deepest basis of religion, and that in which lies its necessity for man as a spiritual, self-conscious being.

“ If we think of God merely as an infinite, which is the negation of the finite, or which is related to the infinite world only by the bonds of arbitrary will, there is no room under such a conception for any religion which is spiritual, or which involves a conscious relation of the human spirit to the Divine.

“ But if we conceive of God as infinite mind, or as that universal infinite self-consciousness on which the conscious life of all infinite minds is based, and whose very nature it is to reveal himself in and to them, then we have before us a conception of the nature of God and the nature of man which makes religion necessary by making it, in one sense, the highest realization of both.”*

* *Philosophy of Religion*, 1880, 159.

IV. THE MORAL ARGUMENT.

„Zwei Dinge erfüllen das Gemüth mit immer neuer und zunehmender Bewunderung und Ehrfurcht, je öfter und anhaltender sich das Nachdenken damit beschäftigt: Der bestirnte Himmel über mir und das moralische Gesetz in mir. Beide darf ich nicht als in Dunkelheit verhüllt, oder im Uberschwänglichen, außer meinem Geschäftskreise, suchen und bloß vermuthen; ich sehe sie vor mir und verknüpfe sie unmittelbar mit dem Bewußtsein meiner Existenz * „

Morality is universal in the human race. The virtues of veracity, honesty, purity, justice and duty have been respected and practiced more or less in every generation. Even the rudest class of people look upon fairness in action, kindness and charity with more satisfaction than they do upon cruelty, injustice and wickedness. The sense of duty is so essential to human nature and is so deeply rooted in it, that even the most wicked and corrupt seek to have at least a show of respectability and honesty; and if they can not help to avow their guilt or wrongs, they plead for excuse with ignorance, necessity or undesignedness. It is by no means a rare phenomenon to find embers of morality glowing in the ash-heaps of man's sensuality and worldliness. Even the savages are not destitute of every sentiment of morality. A great many of them have manifested such a keen sense of right and wrong and such virtues, that they deserve to be held up as models for the benefit of quite a number of people living in the centers of civilization and

* Kant's Kritik der Praktischen Vernunft.

boasting of a high culture. The ancient heathenish religions, though of mythical contents, were not void of great moral tenets. The varied literature, as well as the poetical and legal works of the Hindoos, Buddhists, Chinese, Greeks and Romans contain many a moral gem of unsurpassed splendor. The elimination of the moral element from the works of Homer, Sophocles, and others, would leave them failures.

The Greek and the Roman theaters shook with applause when there flashed forth in the performance a great idea of morality and humanity. All this is a proof that the moral sense is universal and inborn in man.

The sacred literature of the Hebrews, teaching that man is an image of God, endowed with the faculty of walking in the path of godliness and virtue, as a matter of course, maintains that morality is an original part of human nature and a distinctive faculty. This same view has been entertained also by Christianity and the Islam.

Among the Greeks it was Plato, who, believing in the pre-existence of the human soul, assumed that the soul was possessed of moral qualities before it entered into the human body. And Aristotle * is of the opinion that man's great distinction from the animal kingdom consists in his being endowed with a sense of right and wrong good and evil. The mediæval scholastics were of the opinion that man's moral sense was one of the latent faculties (*qualitates occultæ*) of human nature. Moses Maimonides held that in primitive man there was inborn only the sense of truth, while the sense of good and evil in man arose through it from social conventionalism.†

This theory that morality is universal was entertained to

* Politics, I., I., 14. † Moreh Nebuchim, I., 2.

the fullest extent also by Hugo Grotius, who, in his great work, "De Jure Belli et Pacis," declares that the rights and principles of humanity, morality and justice, as far as they concern the international laws, were just as objective as the laws of nature; and in pleading for them he did not appeal merely to the authority of the Scriptures, nor to the papal decrees, but he appealed to the testimony of history and philosophy.

Hugo Grotius pronounced his progressive ideas with a positiveness and frankness which could not fail to produce great opposition. His antipode was Hobbes.

While Grotius held that peaceableness and harmlessness were the natural state of primitive, undegenerated mankind, according to Hobbes primitive mankind lived in a warlike state, or, as he expressed it, in a state of a *bellum omnium in (contra) omnes*. The warlike state of primitive mankind was abandoned (*exeundum est e statu naturæ*) only because self-preservation required it, and because experience advised primitive mankind to subordinate themselves, at the cost of their individual liberties, to a ruler.

Hobbes did not attribute to morality any objective character whatever. He does not admit that there are in man perfectly disinterested passions and sentiments, enabling him to keep in view the public welfare, irrespective of interest and pleasure. He considered the rulers, their interests, their ambition and their determination to keep the nations subjected to their dynasties, the only source of morality. As a matter of course, such doctrines, aiming a blow at the root of morality, aroused great antagonism, and rightly so. Warburton says the whole church militant took up arms against Hobbes. Sir James Mackintosh* compares

* General Views of the Progress of Ethical Philosophy, 68, 1838.

the "moral and political system of Hobbes to a palace of ice, transparent, exactly proportioned, majestic, admired by the unwary as a delightful dwelling, but gradually undermined by the central warmth of human feeling, before which it was thawed into muddy water by the sunshine of true philosophy."

Among Hobbes' controverters, whose number was legion, were the metaphysicians Cumberland, Cudworth, Baxter, Bishop, Parker, and others.

Hobbes' spirit of skepticism and materialism revived again in John Locke, who, in opposition to Descartes, denied entirely the existence of innate ideas. His motto was: *Nihil est in intellectu quod non fuerit in sensu*. Locke's book, "Human Understanding," created a great commotion. At the head of his assailants was the great deist, Lord Shaftesbury. He was of the opinion that the moral sense requires culture and can be developed by practice, by reflection and by the belief in a good and wise God, but as to the origin of the moral sense he maintained that it was organic and an original part of the human constitution.

The reaction against Locke reached its climax in the Scottish School, the representative of which did not merely maintain, as Descartes did, that there were moral and religious ideas innate in man, but that there is in man inborn a sense for every tendency of the human mind. Adam Smith, the father of the "National Economy," and Reid, the father of the "Common Sense Philosophy," assumed that there are in man inborn senses for speech, for commerce, for conversation, etc. These men fell back upon the scholastic theory of the *facultates occulta*.

The skeptic, David Hume, classified the virtues into primary ones, which are an original part of the human constitution, and into secondary ones, which are acquired under

the influences of circumstances, education and example, but this only by means of the primary ones.

The German materialist, Ludwig Buechner, has taken a special interest in collecting in his book, "Kraft und Stoff," the most important objections urged against the theory of innate ideas. He refers to the observation of several travelers who report that there are a great many tribes among the savages who have no idea of wrong or right, of duty and morality, of religion and immortality.

The following excerpt from "The Human Species," by M. de Quatrefages, Professor of Anthropology in the Museum of Natural History at Paris, proves plainly and conclusively that the observations quoted by Buechner are mere misapprehensions.

"A traveler, who, as a general rule, speaks the language of the country very badly, interrogates a few individuals upon the delicate question of the Deity, future life, etc., and his interlocutors, not understanding him, make a few signs of doubt or denial, which have no reference to the question asked, the European, in his turn, mistakes their meaning. Having, in the first instance, merely regarded them as beings of the lowest type, incapable of any conception, however trifling, he concludes, without hesitation, that these people have no idea either of God or of another life; and his assertion, soon repeated, is at once accepted as true by readers who share his opinions about populations unacquainted with our civilization. The history of travel would furnish us with many examples of this fact. Kaffirs, Hottentots, etc., have often been spoken of as atheists, while we now know that this is by no means the case.

"Should the traveler, moreover, speak the language of the country with ease, he is still liable to fall into error. Religious belief forms part of the most hidden depths of

our nature. The savage does not willingly expose his heart to a stranger whom he fears, whose superiority he feels, and whom he has often seen ready to ignore or ridicule what he has always regarded as most worthy of veneration. * * * Fortunately among lay Europeans there are some who, permanently settled in the midst of these populations, become initiated into their customs and manners so as to understand them and to fathom mysteries which would by others have been passed over, on account of offensive or curious forms. * * * Little by little the light has appeared and the result has been that Australians, Melaneseans, Bosjesmans, Hottentots, Kaffirs and Bechuanas have, in their turn, been withdrawn from the list of atheistic nations, and recognized as religious."

Summarizing the issue of his disquisition, Professor de Quatrefages remarks: "The result of my investigation is exactly the opposite of that at which Sir John Lubbock and M. St. Hilair had arrived in maintaining that 'it is difficult to suppose that savages so rude as not to be able to count their own fingers should have acquired intellectual conceptions sufficiently advanced to possess a system of belief worthy of the name of religion.' Obligated, in my course of instruction, to review all human races, I have sought atheism in the lowest as in the highest. *I have nowhere met with it*, except in individuals, or in more or less limited schools, such as those which existed in Europe in the last century, or which may still be seen at the present day." *

Dr. Buechner is right in saying that the question whether certain ideas are innate or not is of the greatest importance to man, as it implies the decision whether man is the product of a higher spiritual world, or whether he is merely

* The Human Species, 473, 482.

the product of the elements of this sublunar world; but Buechner is wrong in believing that the superficial observations of tribes by a few travelers are sufficient evidence to decide such an important question.

But suppose there should be cases in which it was substantiated that there were tribes without the least idea or sentiment of religion and morality, is that sufficient reason to pronounce such tribes as being void of innate ideas? By no means. This could be done of right only if attempts had been made to teach them religion and morality; and if then all methods of instruction applied had failed to awaken in them religious and moral sentiments. There is no reliable record showing that savages have been so entirely incapable of all apprehension.

Modern scientists delight in sneering at the theory of innate ideas. It would be more proper for them to sneer at their own inconsequences. They decried on the one hand the existence of innate ideas, but on the other hand they admit that there are such things as "fundamental or necessary truths" in psychology; as the Aristotelian and Kantian "logical categories;" as the "predicaments" of the Peripatetics, and such things as psychological necessities and modes of thought. What else than innate ideas are all these things, the existence of which is not and can not be denied entirely, even by the materialists?

If there are no innate ideas, how can we account for genius? The great philosophers were not born with their systems, nor were the great poets born with that special branch of poetry in which they excelled; but both the philosophers and the poets are born with that proclivity, tendency, turn and cast of mind that under circumstances causes them to become what they are.

Every educator will most readily admit that one can not make of a child anything else than what the innermost germs of its nature contain. As little as one can elicit from tin the sound peculiar only to gold, just as little is it possible to draw forth any quality from a child when the germ of that quality is lacking in its mind. But all this would not be possible if there were no such thing as innate qualities. If there are no innate ideas, and all ideas are merely acquired by observation, education, discipline, experience, etc., then how is it that so many people, who have no education and not much of discipline, have a sound moral judgment and are virtuous, while a great many others who have passed through such a discipline, training and culture as to have a claim to a higher education, are void of moral character, void of principle, and void of all qualities constituting a nobler and higher manhood?

The moral nature of man is described by the great French poet, Victor Hugo, in the following striking way: "Yes, men who govern us, at the bottom of every citizen's conscience, the most obscure as well as the greatest, at the very depth of the soul of the last beggar, the last vagabond, there is a sentiment sublime, sacred, insurmountable, indestructible, eternal—the sentiment of right. This sentiment, which is the very essence of the human conscience, which the Scriptures call the corner-stone of justice, is the rock on which iniquities, hypocrisy, bad laws, evil designs and bad governments fall and are shipwrecked. This is the hidden, irresistible obstacle, veiled in the recesses of every mind, but ever present, ever active, on which you will always exhaust yourselves and which, whatever you do, you will never destroy. I warn you, your labor is lost; you will not extinguish it, you will not confuse it, for it is easier to

drag the rock from the bottom of the sea than the sentiment of right from the hearts of the people." *

When, among the Greeks, through the sophists, a great confusion, respecting the moral concepts, had prevailed, it was Socrates who stepped forth and brought order into the chaos, not by any new-fangled theory, but by returning to the plain, sound, common-sense ethics of the people and of the great national poets.

Of a similar confusion of moral concepts in England, France and Germany was productive also the materialistic systems of Hobbes and Locke. The opinions arrived at by the English, French and German moralists were greatly varying, and often diametrically opposed to one another. Montaigne reduced morality to "habit;" Mandville derived it from the "vanity" of which the law-givers availed themselves; Hutcheon originated it from "benevolence;" Wollaston thought "veracity" was its root; Shaftesbury accounted for the origin of morality with an innate "moral taste" or "moral sense;" Clark with the "fitness of things;" Lord Kames and Hartley with an "æsthetic taste" or "æsthetic judgment;" Cudworth, the English precursor of Kant, derived the morality from the "intuition of reason;" Wolf and Leibnitz considered the perfectability of human nature the source of all morality in man; according to Helvetius the "self-interest" and according to Bentham the "utility" are the source and the basis of all morality.

This great confusion in the sphere of morality was waiting for a new Socrates. He appeared in the person of Immanuel Kant, who, with the rod of the "categorical imperative," dug out the well of morality in man's moral nature. Kant agrees with the Bible as to the moral nature

* Raymond, *The Orator's Manual*.

of man, but, while the Bible derives all morality from God, Kant derived his moral argument for the existence of God from the moral nature of man: thus, he pronounced boldly the *autonomy of the human nature*. Morality he made independent of religion, but religion—the idea of God and immortality—he made dependent on man's moral nature.

Kant admitted that the moral sense of man was developed, refined and sharpened by experience: and that it is experience that teaches man what is right and wrong, good or evil, useful or hurtful; but as to that question whether there is anything in man independent and uninfluenced by pleasure and pain, by interest or disadvantage, by mere desires and wishes, he answers in the affirmative that there is a "moral law" in man, a moral law which is unconditional, unreserved, reckless and categorical in its commands and demands, and is called generally the "categorical imperative." This "categorical imperative" must be contradistinguished from the "hypothetical imperative," the latter giving laws according to circumstances and expediency, while the hypothetical imperative is the imperative of prudence,

The categorical imperative, commanding man to follow merely the inner necessity, or the pure practical will, and not to allow external circumstances to influence him, is the real principle of liberty.

The sensuous part of man's nature must be determined and ruled by the rational and pure will, which bears its moral worth in itself, and by means of which alone the moral worth of every action is determined.

The categorical imperative addresses itself to man with "thou oughtest:" and the affirmation "thou canst, because thou oughtest" must suffice to induce man to do his duties.

When man has taken cognition of the "moral law" within him, there arises in him a moral sentiment or the respect for that "moral law." It is this respect for the "moral law" within us that makes our actions "moral." Without this respect for the "moral law" within us, no matter from what motives we are actuated, our actions can not be called "moral."

The action from respect for the "moral law" within us is called duty, and, if it has its end in itself, it is called virtue. If man has advanced so far as to be dutiful from mere love of duty then he is *holy*.

The pure, rational, autonomic will is the original law-giver in man, and, constituting man's dignity, has to act upon the following three fundamental laws:

Act according to principles of which thou canst always wish that others may also act according to them.

Act so as to always use humanity—Die Menschheit—as well in thy person as in the person of others, as an end and never as a means.

Act in such a way that the maxim of thy conduct might be made a general law.

These fundamental principles Kant thinks will secure the "autonomy of the will" to the exclusion of the "heteronomy of arbitrary choice." *

The result of Kant's disquisition of the cosmological and teleological proofs was that these arguments are of an anti-nomic nature, that is to say, there are just as many evidences against as in favor of them. In his inquiries Kant was not actuated by any atheistical motives or designs: it was in the light of his philosophy that he judged so. Far from having or cherishing any atheistical or materialistic tenden-

* Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten.

cies or intentions, Kant, on the contrary, was as anxious as any philosopher ever was to destroy the roots of atheism, pantheism, materialism, fatalism, sensualism and pernicious skepticism. He thought the moral argument was the best way to effect this.

His moral argument is essentially as follows: It is peculiar to human reason to proceed from the conditioned to the unconditioned, from the particular to the universal, and from the individual to the collective. Not satisfied with the mere knowledge of the rules in individual cases, human reason seeks for the knowledge of the chief good—the *summum bonum*—the sum of all that man has to strive after.

Now, what is that chief good? Does it consist in happiness or in virtue?

Virtue is only so far the chief good as it implies the conditions of happiness, and, again, happiness is only so far the chief good as it is in consonance with virtue.

If, on the one hand, it is taken into consideration that man is in need of and craves for happiness, and, on the other hand, that virtue is his duty and the condition of his happiness, it will be obvious that the chief good can consist only in virtue and happiness combined.

But experience teaches that there is often the greatest disproportion between virtue and happiness in the world. This disproportion between worthiness and happiness can be solved only by the assumption of another world, where all these dissonances between morality and happiness are turned into symphonies.

From that rule of conduct, as implied in the chief good and to which reason subjects us, Kant infers two things: the existence of God and the immortality of the human soul.

Without God, the wise Governor of the universe, and

without a future life for the compensation of virtue, there is no proportion and no correspondence imaginable between morality and happiness and between worthiness and destiny.

Without God and a future life, the ideas of morality and virtue are mere matters of convenience, of expediency, of approval to serve man's purposes; and there is no reason why they should not be changed or given up entirely if expedient.

Without God and a future life, all hopes, cravings and ideals of man's moral, mental and spiritual constitution would be nothing else but tormenting illusions, impractical ideas, tantalizing hopes and irreconcilable discrepancies.

The demonstration of the existence of God being a demand of man's moral consciousness for a proportion and correspondence between worthiness and happiness, was called by Kant a postulate of pure, practical reason.

There are two other postulates--freedom of will and the immortality. The freedom of will is postulated to make man independent of the external world, and to enable him to be autonomic, or, in other words, to be a law to himself.

The immortality is postulated to render possible the attainment of moral perfection by an infinite progression. And God, as already stated, is postulated to make virtue and happiness, worthiness and felicity proportionate.

The influence Kant's moral argument for the existence of God had, was great. It offered just that which his contemporaries, tired of the English speculations and of the French frivolity, craved for. It has created a moral revival.

These ideas of Kant remained not restricted merely to the studies of the philosophers, nor merely confined to the universities, but they found their way into the theological

seminaries, into the pulpits and into the hearts of the people.

The number of theologians, especially in Germany, who were imbued with Kantian ideas, was great. The sermons of the greatest German preachers—Reinhard, Zollikofer, Amon, Sintenis, Roehr, and others—reflect the Kantian rationalism in its fullest strength. They estimated the “moral argument” of Kant so highly, that it atoned in their eyes for all the sins he had committed against theology. There has never been an original philosopher who had to struggle so little with the antagonism of the theologians as Kant, despite his aggressive, progressive and revolutionary views.

The German poets, Schiller and Heine, were not so well satisfied with Kant as were the theologians. The former considered Kant’s “categorical imperative” too rigorous, and the latter thought Kant’s “moral argument” was nothing but a makeshift and an expediency. According to Heine, Kant’s servant Lampe (the type of the people) is bent on believing something; consequently Kant would appease his spiritual appetite by the “moral argument.”

Heine’s criticism amounts merely to a suspicion of Kant’s sincerity, but is no invalidation of Kant’s moral argument, which will remain solid and valid as long as there will be in existence something like a “moral obligation.” A “moral obligation” presupposes a moral law; and, again, a moral law presupposes a law-giver. The cogency of this argument can not fail to carry conviction with itself.

“It is self-evident,” says Sir William Hamilton, one of the greatest British metaphysicians, “in the first place, that, if there be no moral world, there can be no moral government of such a world; and, in the second, that we have and can have no ground on which to believe in the

reality of a moral world except in so far as we ourselves are moral agents. This being undeniable, it is further evident that, should we ever be convinced that we are not moral agents, we should likewise be convinced that there exists no moral law or order in the universe, and no supreme Intelligence by which that moral order is established, sustained and regulated. Theology is thus again wholly dependent on psycho'logy; for with the proof of the moral nature of man stands or falls the proof of the existence of a Deity."*

Of no little interest and importance to the "moral argument," as set forth by Kant, is the Darwinian theory of the "struggle for existence."

The followers of Hobbes and Locke hailed it as one evidence more in favor of their negation of the innate ideas in general and of the moral sense in particular.

If life were nothing but a struggle for existence, in which the weaker has to perish through the force and violence of the stronger, then in fact there could be no idea or trace of a moral sense inborn in man, no idea of a "conscience," and no idea of a moral order in the world. Then Spinoza would be right in according to each one as much right as he has force; then there could be nothing wrong in warfare and in the use of brutal force; then the mediæval state of society, in which the knights and lieges robbed and plundered people and would not submit to any law but to violence and physical superiority, would be considered as the ideal of society.

There is no doubt that there is a "struggle for existence" going on in society. It can be witnessed daily and everywhere. But the "struggle for existence" is not the supreme

* Hamilton's *Metaphys.*, Lectures II., p. 23.

law as the materialistic followers of Darwin maintain. There are agencies which counteract the sway of that law and keep it within limits; there are moral factors which bid the "struggle for existence" to go thus far and no further.

Every household where maternal love and paternal care tend to raise and to make happy their weak children regardless of the sacrifices of the money, time, comfort and health it requires, is an evidence against the theory of the Darwinian "struggle for existence."

Every provision that society makes for the protection of the weak, for the orphans, for old and infirm people and for the sick that they may not perish in their misery, is a protest against the Darwinian "struggle for existence."

Every champion of human rights and liberties, every pioneer of a lofty idea, and every martyr of a good and great principle is a witness against the Darwinian "struggle for existence," according to which the weaker has to succumb.

Every act of disinterestedness and of self-sacrifice, and every compunction, accusation and condemnation is a testimony against the theory of the "struggle for existence," which promises triumph only to physical and brutal forces, to "self-interest well understood" and to "prudence well applied."

These remonstrations will suffice to prove that the Darwinian term, the "struggle for existence," as defined by the materialist, is not warranted by all facts of experience and observation; nor can the moral consequences of it be in the interest of a higher civilization and humanity.

V. THE HISTORICAL ARGUMENT.

„Es war eine Zeitlang Mode, Gottes Weisheit in Thieren, Pflanzen, einzelnen Schicksalen zu bewundern. Wenn zugegeben wird, daß die Vor-
sehung sich in solchen Gegenständen und Stoffen offenbare, warum nicht
auch in der Weltgeschichte? Dieser Stoff scheint zu groß.

„Aber die göttliche Weisheit d. h. die Vernunft ist eine und dieselbe im
Großen wie im Kleinen, und wir müssen Gott nicht für zu schwach halten,
seine Weisheit auf's Große anzuwenden.

„Unsere Erkenntniß geht darauf, die Einsicht zu gewinnen, daß das von
der ewigen Weisheit Bezweckte, wie auf dem Boden der Natur so auf dem
Boden des in der Natur wirklichen und thätigen Geistes herausgekommen
ist.“*

The course of human life, the destinies of nations and the
emergencies of history are so marvelous, and often so
unexpected, and have so frequently baffled all human expec-
tations, that it has been quite natural for people to see in
the destinies of man the finger and the hand of God or
gods.

The changes of human fortune: the rise and fall of
nations; the ups and downs of every-day life; the course
and consequences of war; the unexpected defeats and vic-
tories of prominent individuals, parties and nations; the
triumphs of knowledge, liberty, justice and truth over
violence, ignorance, oppression and wrong; the missions of
different nations and the peculiarities of the epochs of
history, have been so striking, so astounding and so remark-
able that, in general, the reflecting mind could not help but

* Hegel's Philosophie der Geschichte.

think that all this is more or less the work of a supreme guidance, or Providence.

“Faust,” the type of mankind, says :

“In being’s floods, in action’s storms,
I walk and work, above, beneath—
Work and weave in endless motion!
Birth and death—
An infinite ocean—
A seizing and giving
The fire of the living:
This thus at the roaring loom of time I ply,
And weave for God the garment thou seest Him by.”
—GOETHE’S FAUST.

However, there have been living in every generation a great many who were skeptical concerning Providence. They have accounted for all events with the force and logic of circumstances. Skepticism originated partly in their minds, but mostly from the great cruelties and wrongs, and from the disproportions between *worthiness* and *success*, which are allowed to take place in the sublunar world.

If there is a kind Providence ruling the destinies of mankind, then how is it that so many pages of history are stained with innocent blood? Why do so many tears flow without relief? and why do so often the demons of vice and violence, of falsehood and intrigue triumph over the cause of justice, virtue and truth?

If there is a kind and wise Providence, why does it allow so many horrid abominations and terrible martyrdoms to be incident to the struggle for justice, equality, liberty and truth?

If there is a just Providence, why do so many good plans fail? Why have so many just and righteous people to suffer? And why is luck so frequently attached to the trail and train of wickedness, egotism and selfishness?

These and similar other questions have been ever-recurring complaints against Providence, and there is no prospect whatever that man will ever succeed in solving these problems.

The truth is, the processes in history are analogous to those in nature, and in both realms it is abortive and futile to inquire into the primary *whys* and into the primary *causes*. Both in nature and in history man can only observe the facts, the events and the phenomena, and, at best, he may find out something about the secondary causes and the secondary *whys* and *wherefores*, while all that is primary is of a mysterious nature, sealed with "*Ignorabimus*." The primary *causes*, *whys* and *wherefores* are impenetrable mysteries of the Divine spirit, of the human mind and of the government of the world.

The question why the victories of justice, truth, freedom, enlightenment and knowledge are not brought about with less crime, fewer storms, and fewer struggles, is analogous to the question why storms, earthquakes, floods, etc., are necessary for the production, preservation, growth and evolution of the cosmical bodies and products.

The historical argument for the existence of God has to show that there are vestiges of supreme guidance in the history of mankind, the same way as there are traces of a supreme wisdom in the laws, the harmony, the order and the formation of the physical universe.

In the Midd'le Ages the historical argument for the existence of God was based upon the belief in miracles, which were believed to be the special intercession of God; or upon the observations that certain individuals have changed the course of the social affairs, whereby they appeared to be commissioned for that purpose; or upon such historical emergencies as seem to come just in time to prevent or

retard, or to promote the tendencies of certain individuals or parties, or nations.

In modern times it is the "philosophy of history"—viewing history as a great organism ruled in the totality of its development, of its course and tendencies by certain fixed laws—that has been referred to as being the domain for the rational study of the historical proof of the Divine existence.

The "philosophy of history" propounds questions like the following: Are the events and emergencies of history merely like the commotions of the waves or like the falling snow-flakes—aimless, meaningless—or do they take place designedly and planfully, upon the principle of causality? Is the reign of law supreme merely in nature, and not also in the origin, and growth and overthrow of political institutions, in the rise and fall of dynasties, or the progress and decline of the agencies, tendencies and causes of historical movements? Are all the phenomena of history so connected that they had to occur the way they did, or might just the reverse, or something entirely different, have happened just as well?

The answers to these questions have been given by the following historians, metaphysicians and scholars.

The science of the "philosophy of history" is comparatively a new one. The Italian, Giovanni Battista Vico (1668-1744), is considered its father. His great book, "*Principii de Scienza Nuova*," treating all institutions and laws of society from a natural and historical standpoint, may be called a "natural history of the human race." But it may also be styled a "natural theology derived from history;" for, though it denies the miraculous interference of God in history, it attempts to prove that a Divine Providence guides all historical events by a natural process.

Vico maintains that, in a very remote epoch, man was in a state not much above that of brutes; but, in the lapse of time, under the influence of circumstances the most latent and most innate ideas of morality were awakened, and man gradually advanced from the condition of animality to that of human beings.

His theory was that the development, progress, rise and fall of a nation take place according to fixed laws, analogous to the laws which determine the moral, physical, social and mental development and progress of individuals. The Roman history furnished him with illustrations for his ideas, and he considered the history of the Roman nation typical. Like it, he thought the history of every nation had to pass through three states: that of theocracy, aristocracy, and democracy.

He claimed also that history repeats itself in constantly widening circles.

While Vico held that the reign of law was manifested only in the life and growth of nations and individuals, it was Herder and Kant, the two illustrious Germans, who, in their works, published in one and the same year (1784), advanced the idea that the history of the whole human race was ruled no less by fixed laws than that of one and every individual.

Herder, "the father of universal history," undertook to show in his magnificent fragments, "Ideas toward a Philosophy of the History of Mankind," that the history of the human race shows a progressive development of humanity, of reason and of liberty. This progressive principle, or evolution, Herder considers the paramount law, both in the physical and in the historical world. *It was to him the Divine plan in history.* Man, being organized so that the sense of liberty, humanity, morality, sociability, etc., is

an essential part of his nature, has gradually and progressively developed himself under social, geographical and physical influences. Herder, treating the history of the human race as a part of the history of the physical universe, did not commence his work with a certain tradition or myth, or mythical epoch, but with a rational contemplation of the universe.

Kant begins his essay, "Idea of a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View," thus: "Whatever metaphysical theory one may entertain as to the free will of man, the manifestations of this free will—the human actions—are, as every other event in nature, determined by fixed laws. It is to be hoped that historiography will yet succeed in showing that there is a fixed law in the occurrence of all ethical phenomena, so that, while now they are considered disconnected occurrences, they will then be looked upon as necessary effects of the constantly progressive manifestations of the original endowment of the human race. The marriages, birth and death cases are, as to their number, subjected to fixed laws of nature, and so are the missions, tendencies and ends of the nations determined by fixed laws, although people are not aware of it." Kant expressed the hope that the man will yet come who will do for the discovery of the laws in history what Newton and Kepler did for the discovery of the laws in the physical universe.

The idea that history is ruled by fixed laws, found also at that time in France its representative. Condorcet, who, though a marquis and imprisoned for no other reason than because of his aristocratic descent, proclaimed, heroically, during the "reign of terror" in the French revolution, the belief that liberty was the mother of all true progress and happiness. His excellent work, "*Esquisse d'un Tableau*

Historique de Progress de l'Esprit Humain" (1795), he wrote while in prison. He undertook to prove that mankind has to pass through eight stages, from the primitive barbarism to the civilization of his day, and that it was the Divine design in history to improve mankind, so that crime and vice shall come out of practice and shall become almost impossible.

Progress of civilization meant to him the decrease of crime and the abatement of misery.

That era has to be brought about by the following four measures :

(*a*) The laws of society must not militate against the best interests of the people, but must rather promote them.

(*b*.) The laws of society must be of such a nature as to arouse the good will and the charitable proclivities of the people in such a degree, that people are seized by an aversion to all that is wrong and mean.

(*c*.) Man must learn to know his real interests, and must learn to consider them objects of his duties.

(*d*.) Man must learn to make his conduct conformable to the dictates of reason, and must learn to understand the voice of his conscience.

Just one decade later (1805) the German metaphysician, Fichte, published his "*Grundzuege des Gegenwaertigen Zeitalters*," in which he treats history as the manifestation of a Divine plan, man and every age being essential parts of it.

Fichte is of the opinion that it is obligatory on the individual to sacrifice—if social welfare requires it—everything for the human species. In doing so, an individual overcomes meanness, selfishness and sensuality, and he then lives a true life; and duty will seem to him, or to her, not rigorous, but a pleasure.

Civilization has for its end to subject nature to reason and to become, by way of liberty, the embodiment of reason itself.

Preceding this end are five epochs :

That of the paradisaical innocence, when reason rules man only through instinct.

That of the inception of the reign of sin, when the instinct-reason is growing weaker in the mass of the people, and when it works only by the instrumentality of a few elect persons setting up a compulsory rule of authority, by means of order and systems.

That of sinfulness, when people revolt against the authority of the instinct-reason.

That of justification, when truth and scientific realization are considered the highest authority.

That of perfect justification and holiness, when men will edify themselves by art.

The epoch, in which Fichte was writing, he considered the transition from the third to the fourth, the epoch of scientific rationalism.

One would hardly believe that such a mysticism was taught by Fichte, formerly the advocate of all progressive rationalism, as advanced by Spinoza, Voltaire, Rousseau, Kant and others. Yet it is so.

Fichte had in his former years identified God and the moral order of the world. This incurred the charge of atheism to him. The great Protestant preacher, Dr. Reinhardt, of Dresden, persecuted him so, that, despite his defense, "Appellation an das Publicum gegen die Anklage des Atheismus" (1798), he was deposed from his chair in the Jena University. In his appeal to the public, Fichte asseverated that he was a monotheist, and flung the charge of atheism back upon his persecutor for teaching that God

is a postulate of human happiness. This persecution had a weakening effect upon Fichte's great and bright intellect, and, afraid of further persecution and molestation, he was anxious to appear a good Christian and a good German patriot. Hence his mysticism and his patriotism in his latter years. Previous to that he was a radical rationalist and a cosmopolite in the widest sense of the word.

A new era in the study of the philosophy of history commenced in 1825 with Hegel's "*Philosophie der Geschichte*."

The works of Vico, Herder, Kant, Condorcet and Fichte were only fragmentary and disconnected, and it was first Hegel, who, treating history as a connected totality of phenomena and events, brought system into this branch of study. He put the reflection on history upon a scientific basis.

The universal history is, according to Hegel, the *history of the development of the consciousness of freedom*. It is the domain of reason. Nature, moving in a circle, reproduces only the physical phenomena, while history, being the realm of progress, is incessantly productive of new phenomena: the fundamental law of nature being *gravity*, and the fundamental law of history being *liberty*. Individuals and nations believe they serve their own interest and do what they please, while, in fact, they serve unintentionally and unconsciously the plan of the universal mind. They aim at one thing, but this one thing proves, when looked at in the totality of historical events, an instrument, or a co-ordinate, or a subordinate part of something it was not designed, or anticipated, by man to be.

The great men are the instruments of the progress and development of history. Pursuing their mission, they destroy many a fine plant that happens to be in their way, but that can not be helped. Their passions, and interests

and aims, without their knowing how, are subservient to a higher guidance. When their mission is fulfilled, they drop like the leaves of a tree. They die prematurely, like Alexander; or are assassinated, like Cæsar; or banished, like Napoleon. Their misfortune is a comfort to their envious and jealous contemporaries.

When a nation has matured the fruits of her mission they fall off, but not in her lap; on the contrary, they prove to be the potion annihilating her. Those spirits were matured for the benefit of mankind at large; and they operate in mankind in the form of a new principle.

History and nature are the glory and manifestation of the "Absolute Spirit," which is the real, eternal Truth *per se*. This absolute Spirit arrives at self-consciousness first in the history of the human race, and it has to pass four epochs.

The history of the Orient is the history of the childhood of mankind. In the Orient only one is politically free. There the rational qualities of a government are merely accidental, while the irrational ones are the rule. The Orient is characteristic of stability. There is no progress there, and, even if by valor or virtue anything new is effected, it is only short-lived.

Greek history represents the youth of mankind. Greece was the hothouse of individualism and individualities. First, as in the works of fine arts, the sensuous bears the impression, and is the expression, of the spiritual, so, in Greece, was the individual will and the social morality in union only under the form of beauty. The ethics of self-discrimination and subjection to the moral law, as advocated by Socrates, were not the ethics of the Greek genius, nor was that standard ever liked, or reached, by the Greeks. The æsthetic individualism was their monarch.

The Roman world corresponds to the age of manhood in history. Among the Romans, some were politically free. Individualism had no free scope in the Roman policy. The universal end of the state crushed all individualism. Rome was the pantheon of all gods and spirits, but they were not allowed to retain their vital peculiarities.

The Teutonic world represents the high age of mankind. There, all are free. This high age, unlike the physical, represents not weakness, but maturity. The goal of the history, consisting in the reconciliation of State and Church, of temporal and spiritual principle, is realized in the Teutonic world.

This is Hegel's theory, concerning the history. It must be admitted that Hegel's "*Philosophie der Geschichte*" is a very thoughtful book, full of original ideas and of good, sound observations, but, nevertheless, it is not free from great mistakes, one of the greatest of which is Hegel's idea that the Teutonic world of his age—that meant the Prussian State—was the last act in the great drama of the political history.

Hegel was also severely criticised for his theory that history, in all its particular events, was determined by fixed laws, the way cosmical phenomena are. Such a theory, it was remonstrated, leaves no room for man's free will and responsibility, and does away with every moral measure of individual deeds.

Professor Karl Rosenkranz, one of the ablest disciples of Hegel, tries to show, in his monography, "*Hegel*," and in his collected works,* that Hegel did not, as his critics hold, consider the individuals and their actions a mere "foam of

* *Neue Studien*, III., 259-260.

the sea" of history. Professor Rosenkranz is authority for that.

Hegel's system, being an exponent of the evolution theory, was of great fascination and attraction for his contemporaries, not only in Germany, but in other countries. In France, M. Victor Cousin (1792-1867), a metaphysician, who, through his great eloquence, exerted great influence upon all classes of people, became a zealous student of Hegel's philosophy. Being an eclectic, Cousin did not identify himself with any of the philosophical systems, but he selected from every system sub-elements which seemed to him good, correct and true. As to the philosophical reflection on history, Cousin was a Hegelian, averring that history is ruled by fixed laws.

"History," Cousin thinks, "reflects not only the whole movement of humanity, but, as humanity is the summary of the universe, which is itself a manifestation of God, in the last analysis history is nothing less than the last counter-stroke of Divine action. The admirable order which reigns there is a reflection of eternal order, and its laws have for their last principle God himself. God, considered in his perpetual action upon the world and humanity, is Providence. It is because God, or Providence, is in nature that nature has its necessary laws. This necessity, which the vulgar accuse, which they confound with external and physical fatality, and by which they designate and disfigure the Divine wisdom applied to the world, this necessity is the unanswerable demonstration of the intervention of Providence in human affairs, the demonstration of a moral government of the world. Great events are the decrees of this government, promulgated by the voice of time. History is the manifestation of God's supervision of humanity; the judgments of history are the judgments of God himself.

God has willed that humanity should have a regular development, that it might reflect something of himself—something of the intellectual and intelligible—God being intelligence in his essence, and in his eternal movements and in its fundamental motives, principles.

“Now, if history is the government of God made visible, everything is there in its place, everything is there for good, for everything arrives at an end, marked by a beneficent power. Hence this historic optimism which I have the honor to profess is nothing less than the idea itself of civilization in relation with its first and last principle with Him who has made it in making humanity, and who has formed everything with weight and measure, for the greatest good of all things.

“Either history is an insignificant phantasmagoria—and then it is a bitter, cruel mockery—or it has a meaning, it is reasonable; and, if it is reasonable, it has laws, for every law must have these characters. To maintain the contrary is a blasphemy against existence and its author.” *

In the same lecture (the seventh of his course of the history of modern philosophy, translated into English by O. W. Wight, 1852), M. Cousin maintains that there are only three elements of thought—the element of the infinite, of the finite and of their mutual relation. Starting from this view, he assumes that there are also only three epochs in the development of thought in history.

In the first epoch of history, there ruled the idea of the infinite. In that epoch everything was more or less immobile. Industry was feeble and commerce limited to the inevitable relations of men among themselves in the same country. There was little of internal or maritime com-

* Cours d'Histoire de la Philosophie au 18 Siècle.

merce. The nations were strongly attached to their territory. The mathematical and astronomical sciences were cultivated because they remind man of the ideal, the abstract and the infinite. Experimental philosophy, chemistry and the natural sciences were not cultivated with much attention. The State, having hardly recognized the individuals, was the reign of the absolute, fixed, immutable law. Art, without any æsthetical proportions, was gigantic. Religion had for its end less to govern life than to despise it. Philosophy was nothing else but a contemplation of the absolute unity.

In the second epoch of the human race, there had been ruling the idea of the finite. This second epoch is to be distinguished by progress in industry: by commerce on a large scale; by discoveries and inventions to increase the products of nature by individual activity and enterprise: by the study of nature and of man, of physics and psychology; and by a religion which transfers the earth to heaven, and makes heaven an image of the earth.

A mixture of the idea of the infinite and the finite rules in the third epoch of history. In that epoch, religion is referred to God and the religious dogma is applied to morality. This life is regarded as real and as having a price of immense value. The reciprocal influence of psychology and ontology will constitute the philosophy. All kinds of industry, all mathematical and natural sciences, territorial and maritime power, the prepondering force of the state and individual liberty will prevail.

There is no epoch in history in which one idea has ruled to the exclusion of every other. In every epoch only one idea predominates, and the other ideas are subordinated to it.

The first epoch is called that of the infinite, because the idea prevalent is an obscure synthesis, a unity, the absolute:

while the next epoch is that of diversity, of division and separation.

Cousin's three terms—"the infinite," "the finite" and "their mutual relations" are expressive of the same ideas as Hegel's "absolute," "subjective" and "objective spirit."

Cousin did not say anything new; he was only the interpreter and advocate of Hegel among the French.

By far more original than Cousin was his contemporary, August Comte (1798-1857), the father of the modern agnosticism and of the moral maxim styled altruism. Considering himself the prophet of the positive dispensation, according to which man can not know anything about the beginning and the end of things, and has no way of knowing anything certain about God and immortality, Comte would replace the worship of God by the "worship of humanity." Humanity he took in the sense of the whole human race. The symbols, the nomenclature and the ritual which he recommended to his followers were absurd and foolish, but the agnostical idea, as well as his division of the natural sciences, his altruism and the great stress he laid upon sociology, gained him many admirers and followers.

The six fundamental sciences are mathematics, chemistry, astronomy, physics, biology and sociology. The latter one, sociology, Comte made the main field of his study. He held that history is ruled by fixed laws, so that mankind, in the course of its development, had to pass three stages—the theological, the metaphysical and the positive or scientific. Himself he considered the herald of the positive, or scientific, stage of mankind. Comte's assertion that these three stages are only consecutive to one another is false. Men like Tyndal, Huxley, Spencer and others claim to be positivists, and still they occupy themselves very much with theological and metaphysical ques-

tions. This shows that the interest in religion has remained even in the "age of positivism."

The agnosticism was advocated by Comte, but it was advanced first by Protagoras among the ancient Greeks, and then by the Frenchman, Jean Baptiste Robinet, in the last century.

In our generation, it is the English philosopher, Herbert Spencer, who is considered the main representative of agnosticism. According to this "new philosophy," as set forth by him in the "First Principles" time and space, matter and spirit, cause and force, change, motion and rest are subjects which are absolutely "unknowable." Spencer does not deny the existence of God, but he thinks God is "unknowable," that is to say, there are no ways of knowing anything about God.

No matter how positive the agnostics are in their assertions and how they ignore the remonstrances of their opposites, they can not help to admit that there is no action without an actor, no thought without a thinker, no effect without a cause, and no phenomenon without a substance. These are indisputable truths, and the rock on which the ship of agnosticism will and must strand.

In ignoring all except the external phenomena and the manifestation of force, agnosticism repudiates the very same principles, ideas and methods as "unknowable" by which its very system was brought about.

It is just as fallacious to deny the facts and the philosophy of man's mental, moral and spiritual nature, as it is to deny the facts and the philosophy of matter and of the physical phenomena.

The categories of the human mind which make generalization, classification, specification, induction, deduction, etc., possible, can not be denied, though they are no

external phenomena, nor can the criteria of the logical and psychological truth be denied.

Agnosticism is at present the philosophy of fashion just as the English deism and the French atheism were the fashion in the last century, and as the philosophical systems of Kant, Fichte, Hegel and others were, in succession the philosophical creeds of certain decades.

As a matter of course, man can not know all about God, nor can he comprehend the Divine essence. A God whom *finite* man could comprehend, would be no *infinite* God at all; it would be a mere idol or phantasm. The *infinite* God can never be comprehended by the *finite* man. God is *incomprehensible*, but he is not *unknowable*. There are ample evidences in history, nature and life by which we *can know* not merely that there exists a supreme Being, but also much about the Divine attributes. There are goodness and wisdom enough in life, nature and history to warrant inferences in behalf of the nature of a supreme Being. Those who are earnest in seeking God will find his traces.

The idea that history is an organism developed and ruled by invariable laws became prevalent, not merely among the metaphysicians, but also among the theologians. Foremost among them was Baron Bunsen, who considered it his life's object to translate the Semitic truths into the Japhetic languages. The proof of the great success he met with is his German Bible translation, with commentary, and his "Gott in der Weltgeschichte."

In this latter work he undertook to trace the idea of Providence in the literature of the Aryan and Mongolic nations as well as that of the Hebrews.

Dilating on the laws which govern history, Bunsen remarks: "Noble and enlightened minds have, from early times, sought to justify the moral order of the world.

according to which all evil is self-destructive and doomed finally to perish, but not until after apparent victory and lengthened domination, while the good prevails at last, but only after an arduous struggle and after a long period of misconception and oppression. This justification may either seek its ground in fact or in thought.

“The conception of Divine Providence as consistent with human conscience and reason is presented among the Semitic people in the history telling how, from Abraham to Moses, God delivered his people with a strong hand, and, again, in the book of Job, as the lesson of submission to his mighty arm. Among the Hellenes, the triumph of divine justice was celebrated in epic and drama. The exhibition of the divine Nemesis in the destruction of Troy is the immortal type of the former kind—the epi-theodicy; the vivid representation of an avenging fate in the tragedies of “Æschylus” and “Sophocles” is an equally immortal hymn to the moral order of the world. Finally, in the historical works of Herodotus, the same circle of ideas is exhibited in contact with the actual destinies of nations and their leaders.

“The modern German school—Kant, Lessing, Herder and others—was also the first to apprehend in all their depths the questions which mankind in our late age must natura’ly propound to itself: Is there such a thing as progress in the history of the human race? If so, wherein is it visible? What is its formula? These questions are only capable of a solution if we start from the *assumption of a moral order of the world and the essential unity of the human race*. For progress presupposes something that can advance and that bears within itself the law of its own advance. But this is the case only with mind conscious of volition and cognition, and, therefore, any intelligent

idea of progress presupposes, equally with religion, a Divine government." *

In chapter eight of the same book, Baron Bunsen says : "The individual for the nation, the nation for humanity, humanity for God ; but each individual in God and God in each individual. *This is the supreme law of existence* in this tidal wave of the collective race. The mystery of humanity, as of the universe, is personality ; that is to say, the existence of a Being possessed of consciousness and volition, having his place in the great Whole of which he is a part, and yet forming an antithesis to that Whole—in other words, the co-existence of the free, self-determining moral Will on the one hand, and of External Necessity on the other. This moral personality is the mysterious element in human history."

And in the third chapter of the same book Baron Bunsen argues : "But if there be a moral order of the world—a cosmos of mind which corresponds to the cosmos of the visible world, it must necessarily have cognizable laws. For, if the laws of nature, uninformed by mind, have been discovered, the laws of development of mind must be much more discoverable. If the observation of a portion of a planet's course enables the astronomer to draw the whole curve of its orbit, ought not so many thousands of years of human development enable us to recognize the laws of the orbit of humanity to understand the present? dimly, at least, to forecast the future? If geology has explained to us the succession of the earth's strata, ought not scientific history to give us still more intelligible answers as to the successive deposits of language and religion? The deposition of strata shows us the order in which the crust

* Book I., Introduction, Winkworth's English translation.

of our planet has been formed; the strata of man's consciousness of God, during the successive ages of humanity, reveal to us with equal certainty a process of development; but, more than this, they present to us a reflection of our own inner nature in the mirror of all time—the unfolding of the conscious, finite mind on the scale of universal history.”

The discovery of the invariable laws of history, Baron Bunsen thought, was possible only by the application of the Baconian methods to history.

The greatest imaginary contrast to Bunsen's “Gott in der Weltgeschichte” (1857) was Buckle's “History of Civilization” (1858). Both Baron Bunsen and Mr. Buckle hold that history is ruled by fixed laws; and both maintain that the discovery of these laws must be brought about by means of the Baconian methods, and still the difference is as day and night.

Bunsen considered the laws of history to be the design and wisdom of a supreme Being, just as it is with the laws of nature, while Buckle was a necessitarian. All existences and all that is to take place, are so of necessity. Buckle's “History of Civilization” breathes from the beginning to the end the philosophy of materialism. *Climate, food, soil* and the *general aspects of nature* he considered the most powerful agents in the rise of thought and habit. With the influence of the physical world upon the human mind and *vice versa*, he accounts for everything. He denied the free will of man. Physical causes, physical antecedents and physical sequences were to him the *alpha* and the *omega* of his theory. The statistics were to him an infallible oracle; and they showed, manifestly, that there is a law, not merely in marriages, and suicides and crimes, but also even in such seemingly accidental things, as, for example, that a certain

number of letters are annually dropped into the letter-boxes upon which no direction has been put.

There is no denying it, Buckle's "History of Civilization" is, despite the great errors it contains, a highly interesting work; and its greatest merit consists in having induced a great many to think on the questions of which it treats.

One great mistake Buckle made, was in considering the number of statistics as safe and reliable, as precise and unerring as the laws of nature. The doctrines of the statistics are only arithmetical means, probabilities and approximations. Besides, these statistics can give only a report as to human actions: but there are no statistics as to human thoughts and feelings, to human motives and to the change of human mind: and it is just the knowledge of this that is indispensably necessary *if* the statistics of crime and misery are to be considered laws of nature.

Another great mistake of Buckle's was to consider climate, food, soil and the general aspects of nature the sources from which man's actions spring. There are countries of about the same climate, food, soil and general aspects of nature, and still the inhabitants have a different state and mode of civilization. This is an *evidence* against Buckle, and shows that human actions are dependent upon the moral and spiritual resources of man's mind and upon the genius of the nations. If everything depends merely on climate, food, soil and the general aspects of nature, why does Greece not produce at present such great men in art, politics and philosophy as it did in antiquity? Why does Palestine not produce at present such religious and moral geniuses as it did of old? The climate, the food, the soil and the general aspects of nature have not materially changed in those countries.

In a lecture on woman, Buckle made the assertion that the greatest discoveries in science were made, not by experimental studies, but by intuition. Well, how does the theory of intuition agree with his materialism, expressed in his "History of Civilization?"

Like all materialists, Buckle did not consider that if man had no free will, it would be impossible for him to break away from his former principles and habits; that all courses of actions would be alike to him, and that it would be a mere absurdity to speak of a sense of right and wrong, or of moral principles.

If man has no free will, by what right does Buckle inveigh against the tyrants, priests, Jesuits, Inquisition, etc.?

Buckle thinks religion was the bane of human society. He mistakes the abuse of religion and the religious hypocrisy for real religion. Abuse is unavoidable; but this will not induce any sensible man to abstain, on that account, from the proper use of the subject. One of the greatest mistakes of Buckle was the assertion that moral principles are stationary, and that the progress of civilization was solely due to the intellectual development and to the diffusion of knowledge.

The history of the internal development of the ethical science itself, as well as the history of the civil, criminal and international codes indisputably shows that morality is not stationary. There is a moral progress in the life of the nations, as well as in the life of the individuals. Without morality, the most intelligent and learned classes of people would be only a learned and intelligent mob. Civilization owes to the progress of morality just as much, and perhaps more, than it does to the intellectual progress.

Buckle's starting point was, to use his own words: "Our acquaintance with history being so imperfect, while our

materials are so numerous, it seems desirable that something should be done on a scale far larger than has hitherto been attempted, and that a strenuous effort should be made to bring up this great department of inquiry to a level with other departments, in order that we may maintain the balance and harmony of our knowledge. In regard to nature, events, apparently the most irregular and capricious, have been explained and have been shown to be in accordance with certain fixed and universal laws. This has been done because men of ability and, above all, men of patient and untiring thought have studied natural events with the view of discovering their regularity, and if human events were subjected to a similar treatment, we have every right to expect similar results."

This favorite idea of Buckle that history can be treated by methods, as can any natural science, was controverted by the great English historian, James Anthony Froude. His opinion was that "a science of history, if it is more than a misleading name, implies that a relation between cause and effect holds good in human things as complete as in all others; that the origin of human action is not to be looked for in mysterious properties of the mind, but in influences which are palpable and ponderable. When natural causes are liable to be set aside and neutralized by what is called volition, the word science is out of place. If it is free to man to choose what he will do, or not do, there is no adequate science of him." *

Froude, in writing this, overlooked the fact that Buckle was a necessitarian denying the volition of man.

Froude does not merely deny the existence of fixed laws reigning in history—as it is held by Buckle from a statistical

* Short Studies, Vol. I., page 15.

point of view—but he altogether denies the rule of laws in history. If, so he remonstrates, there were fixed laws ruling history, why can the historian not predict the occurrence of historical phenomena and events with such an exactitude as the astronomer can predict the cycles, or the appearance of the comets and the course of planets?

The subject of this analogy is well chosen, but it is not well applied. The astronomer can foretell merely the recurrence of certain phenomena which have been in existence, but he can predict as little as the historian what new planets there will arise in time, or which of them will wreck, or what collisions or perturbations there will take place in the planetary world.

Though Mr. Froude negatives the rule of laws in history, he admits—nay, he holds most emphatically that history is “a voice forever sounding across the centuries the laws of right and wrong. Opinions alter, manners change, creeds rise and fall, but the moral law is written on the tablets of eternity. For every false word or unrighteous deed, for cruelty and oppression, for lust and vanity, the price has to be paid at last, not always by the chief offenders, but paid by some one. *Justice and truth alone endure and live.* Injustice and falsehood may be long-lived, but doomsday comes at last to them in French revolutions and other terrible ways.” *

This assertion of Froude that there is a moral order and a retribution in history—though more a part of the moral argument for the Divine existence—does at the same time imply principles which are *laws, invariable laws* in the organism of history, and does on that account constitute a part of the historical argument.

* Short Studies on Great Subjects, I., page 28.

Considering all that has been written on the "reign of law in history" by such prominent men as Vico, Kant, Herder, Fichte, Hegel, Bunsen and others, one can not help to think that there must be at least some truth in the belief that history is ruled by certain fixed and invariable laws.

The prevalence of a law, or of laws, in history is an *evidence* of the existence, wisdom and nature of a supreme Being. All that has been advanced since Lucretius, down to the last Darwinist, against a design in nature, will, in the one or in the other form, be also advanced against the existence of a design in history, but *either* is refutable. To the present day there have been a great many things raised by atheists, materialists and Darwinists in objection to a design in nature, but there is not one of all these things and ideas that could not be refuted by facts, or by cogent reasoning. This applies also to all objections raised against the assertion that there is design in history.

It has been demonstrated that if there is a law ruling history, then God can not be considered free in His guidance, and all that occurs does so from necessity. There is no more difficulty in reconciling the idea of a law, or laws, in history with the idea of the freedom of God's actions, than there is in reconciling the idea of the rule of invariable laws in nature with the idea of God's freedom. In either domain God is the source of all laws; they are his will, his wisdom, and their invariability and efficacy depend wholly and solely upon him.

The Oxford Professor, Goldwin Smith, denouncing the theory that there is a rule of necessary laws in history, says:

"I submitted that history is made up of the actions of men, and, that each of us is conscious in his own case that the actions of men are free. I am not aware

that even an attempt has been made to reconcile the judgments of the retrospective conscience, the belief implied in those judgments that each action might have been done, or undone, and the exceptional allowance which conscience makes in the case of actions done wholly, or partly, on compulsion, with the hypothesis that our actions are subject to causation, like the events of the physical world. Wherein is an Alfred more the subject of moral approbation than a good harvest, or a Philip II. more the subject of moral disapprobation than a plague? This is a question to which I am not aware that an answer has yet been given.

“Still, if it could be shown that history does, as a matter of fact, run in accordance with any invariable law, we might be obliged to admit that the necessarians had gained their cause, though a strange contradiction would then be established between our outward observation and our inward consciousness.” *

Goldwin Smith thinks the idea that history is ruled by invariable laws is irreconcilable with man's volition. That is not naturally so. The Jews believe in the volition of man, and consider it one of the cardinal teachings of their faith, and still they admit that all is foreseen by God. Rabbi Akiba, one of their greatest teachers and an outspoken advocate of man's free will, said: “Everything is foreseen and still man is free.” †

Rabbi Akiba's idea was that there is a Divine plan in the guidance of mankind: that plan has been, and is going to be, realized without fail, but there is no predetermination as to the individuals that are instrumental in it. It is the law of Divine wisdom that good people shall be instru-

* Lectures on the Study of History, II. † Pirkeh Aboth, IV.

mental in the good occurrences, while the wicked are instrumental in the evil events. (Megalgin Schuth al Yedey Saccie.) This rabbinical idea is illustrated by Rabbi Akiba in the following most interesting way: "The delivery from Egypt would have taken place even if Moses and Aaron had not arisen in its behalf; the temple at Jerusalem would have been built even if David and Solomon had not taken steps for its erection: the idolatry would have been practiced among the ten tribes of Israel even if Jeroboam had not introduced and favored it; and the temple at Jerusalem would not have escaped destruction even if Nebuchadnezzar had not been born." *

According to this idea, the Divine plan is to be realized unconditionally and without fail by some one, but no certain individual is predetermined for that purpose. Thus the rabbis thought to have solved the problem of God's foreordination and man's volition.

John Draper is of the opinion that "the civilization of Europe has not taken place fortuitiously, but in a definite manner and under the control of natural laws; that the procession of nations does not move forward like a dream, without reason or order, but that there is a predetermined, solemn march, in which all must join, ever moving, ever resistless, advancing, encountering and enduring an inevitable succession of events: that individual life, and its advancement through successive stages, is the model of social life and its secular variations. The control of natural law in the shaping of human affairs is not consistent with free will, any more than the unavoidable passage of an individual, as he advances to maturity and declines in old age, is inconsistent with his voluntary actions. That higher law

* Masecheth Simchoth, VIII.

limits our movements to a certain direction and guides them in a certain way.

"As a stoic of old used to say: 'An acorn may lie torpid in the ground, unable to exert its living force until it receives warmth and moisture, and other things needful for its germination; when it grows, it may put forth one bud here and another bud there, the wind may bend one branch and the frost blight another, the innate vitality of the tree may struggle against adverse conditions or luxuriate in those that are congenial, but, whatever the circumstances may be, there is an overruling power forever constraining and modeling it: the acorn can only produce an oak.' " *

In the same strain, Draper says, right in the first chapter: " * * * Yet it is none the less true that these contradictory conditions—free will and fate, uncertainty and destiny—coexist, and all are watched by the sleepless eye of Providence. * * * Well has a Hindoo philosopher remarked that he who stands by the bank of a flowing stream sees, in their order, the various parts as they successively glide by, but he who is placed on an exalted station views at a glance the whole as a motionless silvery thread among the fields. To the one there is an accumulating experience and knowledge of man in time; to the other there is the instantaneous and unsuccessive knowledge of God."

As this illustration of an acorn shows, Draper took the volition of man not for the power in man to choose at any moment anything he pleases, but rather as the development of the better peculiarities of man's nature, combined with the ability to conform his actions to the dictates of that better developed nature.

* History of Intellect. Develop. of Europe, XXIV.

Man ceases not to be free even if circumstances from without, or physical circumstances from within, interfere with the realization of his plan or ideas. On the contrary, just such obstructions and hindrances may elicit his volition, if he learns to know them, and to act accordingly. "Man is free, is free though he be born in chains."

The volition of man is not conditioned by the power to do what one pleases; it is only the rude man who considers *that* man's freedom of will, while the better educated a man is, the more regard in his actions will he have for justice, truth, virtue, humanity, welfare of others and to the duties of life.

If man is considered a free being, despite all the lower instincts, proclivities and temper of his nature, then there is no reason indeed why he shall not be considered a free being, despite the limitations which the reign of laws in history impose upon him.

It is a great mistake to believe that the teachings of statistics prove that man has no free will, but is subject to the laws of necessity as arising from the force of circumstances. Just the reverse is the truth. The statistics of crime and misery, and of everything touching the volition of man, are only a regularity of occurrences, which happens only because people do not use their free will, or because they have not learned how to use it. Not *necessity*, but the indifference, ignorance and apathy of the people are the cause of the regularity of the statistical numbers as far as they come in the sphere of volition. This is so true and so sure, that even the statisticians themselves admit that the statistics are variable. How could such a variability be possible if it did not depend upon man's free will, and if man had none? The statistics of crime and misery show to man a state of circumstances endangering his welfare

and safety: however, he, by his free will, is able to guard against them, or to avoid such a state altogether.

Man is free: the struggles with powers from without and from within are not to enslave or to crush him, but rather to develop his manhood and the sterling qualities of his character.

“ Know that the human being’s thoughts and deeds
Are not, like ocean billows, blindly moved.
The inner world—his microcosmos—is
The deep shaft out of which they spring eternally.
They grow by certain laws, like the tree’s fruit—
No struggling chance can metamorphose them.
Have I the human *kernel* first examined,
Then I know, too, the future will and action.” *

* Schiller’s *The Death of Wallenstein*, II., 3.

VI. THE ARGUMENTATION OF THE JEWISH THEOSOPHY.

“Quand et comment la race sémitique arriva-t-elle à cette notion de l'unité divine que le monde a admise sur la foi de sa prédication? Je crois que ce fut par une intuition primitive et dès ses premiers jours. On n'invente pas le monothéisme: l'Inde qui a pensé avec tant d'originalité et de profondeur, n'y est pas encore arrivée de nos jours; toute la force de l'esprit grec n'eut pas suffi pour y ramener l'humanité sans la coopération des peuples sémitiques. On peut affirmer de même que ceux-ci, n'eussent jamais conquis le dogme de l'unité divine, s'ils ne l'avaient trouvé dans les instincts les plus impérieux de leur esprit et de leur cœur.” *

The Bible teaches a spiritual, universal, one only God, and attributes to him holiness, goodness, mercy, righteousness, omnipotence and love. He is long-suffering, just in retribution and merciful to forgive. He does not want that the sinner shall die, but that he shall repent and live. He has pure eyes. He will not see wickedness, and hates every wrong. He is holy and wants man to be holy. He is infinite and eternal. He is omniscient and all-wise. He is omnipotent and omnipresent.

In short, the conception that God is the Creator, the Ruler and the Preserver of the Universe, and the Father of mankind, reverberates in all teachings, anthropomorphism, anthropopathism and in all other presentations of him in the Bible.

* Ernest Renan, *Etudes de Histoire Religieuse*.

“The primary difference between the religion of Israel and that of the surrounding nations,” says Professor Robertson Smith, “does not lie in the idea of a theory, or in a philosophy of the invisible world, or in the external forms of religious service, but in a personal difference between Jehovah and other Gods. That difference, again, is not of a metaphysical, but of a directly practical, nature. It was not defined once for all in a theological dogma, but made itself felt in the attitude which Jehovah actually took toward Israel in those historical dealings with his nation to which the words of the prophets supply a commentary. Everything that befell Israel was interpreted by the prophets as a work of Jehovah’s hand, displaying his character and will—not an arbitrary character or a changeable will, but a fixed and consistent holy purpose, which has Israel for its object and seeks the true felicity of the nation, but, at the same time, is absolutely sovereign over Israel, and will not give way to Israel’s desires or adapt itself to Israel’s convenience. No other religion can show anything parallel to this. The gods of the nations are always conceived either as arbitrary or changeable, or as themselves subordinate to blind fate, or as essentially capable of being bent into sympathy with whatever is, for the time being, the chief desire of their worshipers, or, in some more speculative forms of faith, introduced when these simpler conceptions broke down, as escaping these limitations only by being raised to entire concern in the petty affairs of man. In Israel alone does Jehovah appear as a god near to man and yet maintaining an absolute sovereignty of will, a consistent independence of character: and the advance of the Old Testament religion is essentially identified with an increasing clearness of perception of the things which this character of the Deity involves. The name of Jehovah

becomes more and more full of the meaning, as faith in his sovereignty and self-consistency is put to successive tests in the constantly changing problems presented by the events of history. * * * Now, when we speak of Jehovah as displaying a consistent character in his sovereignty over Israel, we necessarily imply that Israel's religion is a moral religion: that Jehovah is a god of righteousness, whose dealings with his people follow an ethical standard." *

In the same spirit as Professor Smith, Professor Kuenen describes the moral and the universal character of the God of the Bible: "Who does not remember how high an Isaiah, for example, raises the grandeur of Jahveh, while representing him as the mighty One whose purposes with regard to his people are served by Assur and Egypt, and these the prophets—once more to quote Wellhausen—absorbed into their religion that conception of the world which was destroying the religion of the nations, even before it had been fully grasped by the secular consciousness. Where others saw only the ruin of everything that is holiest, they saw the triumph of Jahveh over delusion and error! What was thus revealed to the eye of their spirit was no less than the august idea of the *moral government of the world*—crude as yet, and with manifold admixtures of error, but *pure in principle*. The prophets had no conception of the natural connection of the power and operations of nature. They never dreamed of the possibility of carrying them back to a single cause, or deducing them from it. But what they did see, on the field within their view, was the realization of a single plan—everything, not only the tumults of the people, but all nature likewise—subservient to the working out of one great purpose. The

* The Prophets of Israel, p. 80.

name—ethical monotheism—describes better than any other the characteristics of their point of view, for it not only expresses the character of the one God whom they worshipped, but also indicates the fountain from which their faith in him welled up.’” *

These two quotations make it evident that even the most radical wing of the Leyden School, as represented by Kuenen, Robertson Smith, Wellhausen, Oorth, Knappert and others, concur that the Bible is teaching a God of a righteous, universal, spiritual and moral character. The great question regarding the biblical conception of God, which, mainly through the Leyden School, has caused of late much agitation, is: *When, and at what epoch in the history of the ancient Hebrews did the conception of only one universal and spiritual God arise?*

The old schools of biblical criticism, represented by Eichhorn, Vater, De Wette, Ewald, Hupfeld, Noeldecke, Hitzig, Geiger, Graetz, Dillman and others maintain that it was Moses who had the conception of one only universal and spiritual God. From this view the modern Leyden School took a departure, declaring that the prophetic monotheism—meaning the one only spiritual and universal God—originated as late as the eighth century, and found its first mouthpieces in the prophets Amos and Hosea, 800 years B. C.

The theory of the Leyden School as to the conception of God is expressed by the pastor, I. Knappert, as follows: “Moses not only preached Jahveh as the God of Israel, but he wished the tribes to worship this God in contrast to, and to the exclusion of, all other gods. But we do not by any means intend to assert that Moses was a monotheist, or that he supposed Jahveh to be absolutely the only God, and the

* Hibbart, Lectures, pp. 132-133.

other gods are not to exist at all. Such pure monotheism as that belongs to much later days. It was not till many centuries after the time of Moses that the prophets attained to so lofty a conception. Moses himself believed in the existence of other gods just as much as in that of Jahveh; but he taught that Jahveh was the only one to whom the Israelites ought to pray. He was profoundly impressed with Jahveh's majesty and power. Jahveh only was Israel's God. We find this principle expressed in the phrase of the Law, "Ye shall have no other gods before me."*

Pastor Knappert repeats only the following view of Professor Kuenen: "From the written records that have been presented to us in the Old Testament, we are acquainted with three forms of Jahvism—under which name we include both the ideas which were formed of Jahveh and the proper Jahveh worship. Those three forms are: the Jahvism of the *people*, of the *prophets* and of the *Law*.

"The *people* acknowledged and worshiped other gods besides Jahveh, and thus fell naturally into what is usually called by a technical term *syncretism*, that is, into a combination and intermingling of ideas and customs, which had originally been connected with various gods.

"The *prophets* saw in Jahveh the only God, and so became naturally, as it were, to ascribe to him alone all the attributes and characteristics which in polytheism and by the people were distributed among the various gods.

"The *Law* finally must—as will be evident farther on—be regarded as a compromise between the popular religion and the Jahvism of the prophets; and in this is implied that in

* Religion of Israel, p. 15.

the Jahveh worship of the Law also there must be elements which originally belonged to the service of other gods.”*

The system of Professor Kuenen and his followers has attracted great attention, and its success and fascination are mostly due to the boldness with which the evolution theory is applied to the Bible and to its great ideas, and also to the great learning manifested in Kuenen's, Wellhausen's and others' works.

The system of the Leyden School is a house divided against itself by a great many self-contradictions, and is based upon a great number of unwarranted conjectures, arbitrary dislocations of passages, fantastically interpreted words and texts, and upon an endless confusion of premises and sequences.

The objection to the Mosaic antiquity of the conception of the one only spiritual and universal God, as advanced by the Leyden School, may be summarized in the following four points:

a. The Hebrews before Amos and Hosea considered Jahveh to be a tribal, a national god—a god among many gods.

b. The Hebrews before Hosea worshiped their tribal, or national God, Jahveh, under the image of bulls without the contemporaneous prophets reproaching them for it.

c. The polytheism was not an innovation, or a departure, from the primitive monotheistic religion of the Hebrews, but was their very primitive faith.

d. The conception of Jahveh before Amos and Hosea was deficient in moral perfection.

These views, as the following examination shows, drawn mostly from disconnected and arbitrarily interpreted pass-

* The Religion of Israel, I., 230.

ages, will be denied a general assent as long as there will be one Hebrew Bible left for consultation, and as long as there will be readers who are able to detect self-contradictions in a system or a book.

The same Dr. Kuenen, who holds that the Hebrews before Amos and Hosea did not arrive further than at the conception of a tribal and national God, and that they did not know anything about a one only spiritual and universal God, admits, as the following quotation shows, that the Sinaic Decalogue is of Mosaic antiquity: "There is no real obstacle to the supposition that the ten words are derived from Moses, or, on the contrary, that their contents and arrangements are entirely in accordance with the theory of their Mosaic origin. * * * The tradition which ascribes them to Moses, is worthy of respect on account of its indisputed antiquity. Nevertheless, if it were contradicted by the contents and form of the 'words,' we should have to reject it. But this is not the case. Therefore we accept it, reserving our right to subject each separate commandment to special criticism, and, if necessary, to deny its Mosaic origin. We acknowledge it as a fact that Moses, in the name of Jahveh, prescribed to the Israelitish tribes such a law as is contained in the ten words." *

Now, what a self-contradiction in Professor Dr. Kuenen. The prophetic monotheism, meaning the one only spiritual and universal God, is not of Mosaic antiquity: but the Decalogue, which gives the very same conception of God, is of Mosaic antiquity. If this is no contradiction, then there is no such a thing as contradiction: and there is certainly no good reason to say that the Decalogue does not teach

* The Religion of Israel, pp. 284-286.

and imply the conception of a one only universal and spiritual God.

The German Professor, Dr. Ernest Meir, a distinguished Oriental philologist, who has examined the antiquity of the Decalogue from a liberal point of view, concludes his highly interesting book, "*Die Urspruengliche Form des Decalogs*," with the following ideas :

"The conception of God as a holy Being free from all restraints and above all necessitation of nature, must have been gained in the Mosaic epoch by means of a great historical event. In the closest connection with that idea is the other that this free holy Being must be worshiped correspondingly in the congregation: 'Ye shall be holy, for I, the Eternal, your God, am holy.'

"The Decalogue, the Mosaic origin of which nobody doubts, contains these thoughts in wonderful purity. * * *

"From this it follows that the teachings of Moses were purer, broader and more original than is generally believed; and that the fundamental teachings of the Pentateuch like 'Love thy fellow-man as thyself,' or 'Ye shall be holy, for holy am I, the Eternal, your God,' and a great many others, are of Mosaic antiquity. They are essentially contained in the Decalogue."

And on page 21, of the same book, Dr. Ernest Meir says: "The first commandment of the Decalogue contains the idea of the spirituality of God to the fullest extent."

Another self-contradiction of Professor Dr. Kuenen is that, while he strains every nerve to show that the prophetic monotheism was propounded first by Amos and Hosea in the eight century B. C., he ascribes to some individuals living before that epoch a conception of God, which means nothing else but the pure "prophetical monotheism."

On page 317 he says, concerning the Nazaritism and the

prophecy of the epoch of Samuel: "The two together serve as a guarantee that the watchword, 'Jahveh, the God of Israel,' had not fallen into oblivion, but, on the contrary, were alive in the hearts of many in such a way that it completely filled them, and gave a definite tendency to all they did or left undone. Not with all, it is true, but still with a few, and such a conception of Jahvism left no room at all for the service of other gods."

On page 318 it reads: "Did Samuel succeed in winning him—Saul—over to the worship of Jahveh? Is this, perhaps, the real meaning of the certainly historical proverb 'Is Saul among the prophets?' of which two different and not altogether satisfactory explanations are given us in Samuel? Did it thus originally express the astonishment of those who had discovered that a man who had hitherto shown himself indifferent to Jahveh was now seized with prophetic enthusiasm? But, whatever may be the history of Saul's religious development, as king he governed in the spirit of the national and Jahvistic party. Thus it is related of him that he tried to root out the soothsayers and ventriloquists, whom strict Jahvism could not tolerate."

In order to keep up his theory, Professor Dr. Kuenen ignores passages like the one in Samuel (viii. 3, 4), which reads: "He, Samuel, spake unto all the house of Israel: If ye do return unto Jahveh with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and the Astartes from among you, and turn your hearts unto Jahveh and serve him only, that he may deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines: ' and the children of Israel put away the Baalim and the Astartes, and served Jahveh only."

What does it mean when Samuel said to Saul: "Hath Jahveh as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying his voice? Behold, to obey is better than sacri-

fice, and to attend, more than the fat of the ram. For the sin of witchcraft is rebellion, and idolatry and image-worship." *

Such passages, which plainly show that the prophetic monotheism was known long before Amos and Hosea, do not carry any weight in the eyes of Professor Kuenen and his followers, and are, to suit their hypothesis, as a rule, pronounced to be of a later date and to be interpolations.

The great fault of the Leyden School is that they take every passage of the Bible where Jahveh is represented as a tribal and national God in a literal sense, and do not make any allowance whatsoever for the Hebrew idiom. It does not follow that because man says "our God," or "the God of my fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," that he must mean a national or a tribal god. Amos, Hosea and all the later prophets used the term "Jehovah, the God of Israel" and still even Dr. Kuenen admits that they were propounders of the one only spiritual God. Professor Dr. Wellhausen, in his article "Israel," in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, took a step farther than Professor Kuenen. He denies the Mosaic antiquity of the Decalogue, and asserts that, according to Exodus xxxiv., the commandments which stood upon the two tablets were neither those of Exodus xx., nor those of Deuteronomy v., but the ten laws as contained in Exodus xxxiv., from verse 12 to 27.

This hypothesis is as wild as one can be, and reminds of Dr. Bertheau's attempt to classify the laws of the Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers in seven groups, each of ten laws.

The "Decalogue" of the Bible is no other one than the Sinaic one in Exodus xx. and Deuteronomy v. The difference between these two is only a verbal one, and does not

* Samuel, xv. 23-24.

change the sense materially. But suppose it would be so, as Wellhausen claims it to be, then his assumed Decalogue would be a proof against Dr. Kuenen's theory, because just these passages—12-27 in Exodus xxiv.—breathe a prophetic monotheism.

Kuenen and his followers maintain that the Hebrews prior to the eighth century B. C. had worshiped Jahveh under the form of a bull and other images without the prophets censuring them for it.

This assertion is in contradiction with the second of the Ten Commandments, but Dr. Kuenen is not embarrassed at all. He argues: "Moses' attitude toward the worship of images is a very disputed point. The second of the Ten Commandments forbids it without reserve, but it is strongly suspected of having been remoulded and enlarged. Its great length alone gives rise to this presumption. If it embraces nothing more than the words 'Thou shalt have none other God before my face,' we should not think of calling it incomplete; the rest is superfluous and, therefore, suspected." *

The Leyden School does not dispute that the prophets were opposed to polytheism, but they claim that the worship of Jahveh under the form of a bull, or images, was not found objectionable by the prophets.

This idea had already been contested by Dr. Ernest Meir, who rejects the view that the prohibition of images is a mere appendage to the first verse of the second commandment of the Decalogue: "Since the conception of a spiritual God, who is free from all necessitation of nature and who is the absolute power of all, is the fundamental idea of the

* The Religion of Israel, 227.

Jewish religion, it was plain and implicit that that spiritual Being can not be represented by anything that is visible or tangible." *

Of late, it was also Dr. Dillman, Professor in the Berlin University, who, in his "Pentateuch Commentary," took occasion to expose the mistakes of Kuenen, Wellhausen and others. Their theory that the prohibition of the images in the second of the Ten Commandments is not of Mosaic antiquity, but only a later interpolation, he refutes as follows :

"That a commandment to which there underlies the idea of the invisibility and spirituality of God was above the cognition of Moses and, consequently, of much later origin, can not be held with any good reason.

"Not to mention Exodus xxxii., where it is said of Moses that the presentation of Jehovah by an image must not be tolerated, it is indisputable that the traditions of the Patriarchs contain a religion without pictures : and that also in the central sanctuary, after Moses, and in that at Jerusalem, a representation of God by pictures was not tolerated.

"The idolatry of the golden calf (Exodus xxxii.), as well as that of the Kingdom of Israel, does not prove at all that it was not prohibited, but, rather, how difficult it was, especially among the Canaanitic portion of the population, to have this prohibition respected.

"The prophets Amos and Hosea, who fought against the idolatry of Dan and Bethel, have nowhere pronounced the spirituality of God as a new doctrine, but have everywhere referred to it as something already well known by the people.

"A scrutiny into the post-Mosaic epoch will show that the

* Urspruengliche Form des Decalogs, p. 21.

worship of the invisible, spiritual God was introduced in the central sanctuary. Now, who else but Moses can be its author?

“He had been led to enact prohibition laws against idolatry, partly through the knowledge he derived from the traditions of the Patriarchs, and partly from aversion to the Egyptian mythology.

“There were ancient lawgivers besides Moses who have rejected the idolatry. This was done by Mageon;* and also the Persians,† in remote antiquity, had no idols.

“It is to be remembered that it does not read ‘Thou shalt have no picture of me,’ but ‘Thou shalt have no picture.’ While this commandment is directed against personification, the other one is opposed to polytheism; and both personification and polytheism are the most essential criteria of heathenism.”

Professor Smith goes so far as to assert that the image-prohibition was not of Mosaic antiquity, and he maintains: “There is no feature in Hosea’s prophecy which distinguishes him from earlier prophets so sharply as his attitude to the golden calves, the local symbols of Jehovah, adored in the Northern sanctuaries. Elijah and Elisha had no quarrel with the traditional worship of their nation. Even Amos never speaks in condemnation of the calves. But in Hosea’s teachings they suddenly appear as the very root of Israel’s sin and misery. * * * Amos never speaks of the golden calves as the sin of the Northern sanctuaries, and he has only one or two allusions to the worship of false gods or idolatrous symbols.”‡

Almost every idea expressed in these two quotations is an

* Diog. Laertius, VI. † Strabo, 15, 3, 13. ‡ The Prophets of Israel, 170; 140.

error. It is an inexcusable mistake in Professor Smith to say "that Elijah and Elisha had no quarrel with the traditional worship of their nation." What did it mean when Elijah said to Ahab, "And I will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, and like the house of Barla for the provocation thou hast provoked me to anger, and induced Israel to sin?" (I. Kings xxi. 22.) What did it mean when almost the same words were used by Elisha's disciple in addressing Jehu? (II. Kings ix. 9.) And what is the meaning of the condemnation of idolatry as expressed in the first book of the Kings (xiv. 25, 26), and in the second book of the Kings (iii. 2-3)?

Not only Elijah and Elisha denounced the image worship, but their predecessor, the prophet Abiyah, quarreled with Jeroboam, saying, in the first book of the Kings: "And thou hast done more evil than all that were before thee; and thou art gone and hast made unto thyself other gods and molten images to provoke me to anger, and me hast thou cast behind thy back." (xiv. 9.)

And just as false is also Professor Smith's assertion that Amos did not speak against the golden calves as the sin of the Northern sanctuaries. Besides several allusions, there are in the prophetic book of Amos direct attacks on the idolatry. (iii. 14; iv. 4; v. 24; viii. 14.)

With regard to all this, and to a great deal more that could be advanced in proof of the Mosaic antiquity of image-prohibition among the Israelites, it is ridiculous for Wellhausen to say: "The prohibition of images was, during the older period, quite unknown. Moses himself is said to have made a brazen serpent, which, down to Hezekiah's time, continued to be worshiped at Jerusalem as an image of Jehovah."* The same error is expressed also by Dr. Kuenen.†

* *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Israel. † *Religion of Israel*, I., p. 287.

The brazen serpent was no image of Jehovah, or of any god. It was a relic from the pre-Sinaitic age, and was a momentary concession to the popular superstition. Such momentary concessions had to be made by all lawgivers, but neither Moses nor any other Hebrew prophet considered it the image of Jehovah. That some people brought incense to it, is only an evidence of their folly and superstition, and shows how hard work it was for the prophets to make people understand the lofty conception of the one only spiritual and universal God, who was already proclaimed as such by Moses, "the servant of Jehovah."

According to Kuenen and his followers, polytheism was the original religion of the Hebrews, and, in time, it evolved among them into the belief in one tribal god, and later, in the days of the prophets Amos and Hosea, into the prophetic monotheism.

The very same prophet, Hosea, whom Professor Kuenen considers as one of the heralds of the prophetic monotheism, does not pronounce his monotheistic views as something new, but, on the contrary, is the loudest in exhorting people to return to Jahveh—"Return, O Israel, even unto Jahveh, thy God." (Hosea xiv. 2.) The term, "Return unto Jahveh," is a standing protest against Kuenen's evolution theory, according to which the prophet Hosea ought not to have said "*Return* unto God," but, rather, "*Advance* unto God." If the primitive religion of the Hebrews had been polytheism, then neither Hosea, nor any other prophet, would have exhorted people to return to the parental conception of God. If polytheism had, in fact, been the primitive, legitimate religion of the Hebrews, Elijah, the great implacable antagonist of all idolatry, would certainly not have invoked when on Mt. Carmel "Jahveh, the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Israel," as he really did. (1. Kings xviii. 36.)

And Elijah most certainly had just as pure a conception of Jahveh as the prophet Amos, whom Dr. Kuenen considers the father of the prophetic monotheism. The expression of Amos (iv. 13), "Jahveh is the God of Hosts," is nothing new: it was used long before him by Elijah (1. Kings xix. 10), who, when in the cave of the Mount of God, said: "I have been very zealous for Jahveh, the God of Hosts." Nay, the term "Jahveh, the God of Hosts," had already been used by Hannah, "Die Prophetenmutter," as Hitzig calls her.

Professor Kuenen, Smith and others refer, on behalf of their hypothesis, to passages like this in Joshua (xxiv. 2): "On the other side of the river did your fathers dwell in old time, even Therach, the father of Abraham and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods." It is plain that Abraham, the first Hebrew, is not included among the idolatrous forefathers: and the very same chapter in Joshua is the best evidence against the assertion that polytheism was the primitive religion of the Hebrews. Not merely in the end of the book of Joshua, but right at the beginning (iv. 9), when Joshua addressed the people, Jahveh is spoken of as the God, the *living God* of Israel.

Laying all these particulars aside, it must be borne in mind that the Bible teaches that not *polytheism*, but *monotheism*, was the primitive religion of mankind. Polytheism originated in the degeneracy and apostacy of the human race, but even then, according to the Bible, monotheism had its representatives in individuals like Noah, Hanoeh, Malkizedek and others. In conformity with the Bible, Dr. Marx Mueller says: "It is too often forgotten by those who believe that a polytheistic worship was the most natural unfolding of a religious life, that polytheism must everywhere have been preceded by a more or less conscious

theism. In no language does the plural exist before the singular. No human mind could have conceived the idea of gods without having previously conceived the idea of a god." *

In the "Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion," given in 1878 before the Hibbert Institution, Professor Marx Mueller took a firm stand in repudiating the theory that fetichism was the original religion of the human race. He showed, by references to the works of different missionaries and travelers, that the real religion of the savages and negroes is something quite distinct from that which is generally called fetichism, and that they all believe in a Supreme Being.

Since that time it has become more universal to assume that monotheism, and not fetichism, was the primitive religion of the human race, and that fetichism and polytheism are a mere degeneracy of the original monotheistic religion.

Professor Renouf thinks: "It is incontestably true that the sublime portions of the Egyptian religion are not the comparatively late result of a process of development, or elimination, from a grosser. The sublime portions are demonstrably ancient, and the last stage of the Egyptian religion, though known to the Greek and Latin writers, was by far the grossest and most corrupt." †

The great Egyptologist, Professor Rawlinson, expressed the following opinion concerning the antiquity of the monotheism: "First, then, it appears to be certain that the Egyptian religion, like most other religions in the ancient

* Chips from a German Workshop, I., 348.

† Hibbert, Lectures on the Growth of the Egyptian Religion, pp. 119-120, 1879.

world, had two phases or aspects : one that in which it was presented to the general public, or vast mass of population : the other that which is borne in the minds of the intelligent, the learned and the initiated. To the former it was a polytheism of a multitudinous and, in many respects, of a gross character ; to the latter it was a system combining strict monotheism with a metaphysical speculative philosophy on the two great subjects of the nature of God and the destiny of man, which sought to exhaust those deep and unfathomable mysteries. Those who, as Dr. Birch, take the lowest views of the Egyptian religion, admit that the idea of a single self-existent deity was involved in the conception which it sets forth, and is to be found not infrequently in the hymns and prayers of the Ritual. It is impossible that it should have been so, unless there was a class of persons who saw behind a popular mythology, understood its symbolical and metaphysical character, and were able in this way to reconcile their conformity to the established worship with the great truths of natural religion, which, it is clear, they knew and which they must have cherished in their heart of hearts.

"The primary doctrine of the Esoteric religion undoubtedly was the real essential unity of the Divine nature. The sacred texts taught that there was a single Being, the sole producer of all things both in heaven and earth : himself not produced of any—the only true, living God, self-originated—'who exists from the beginning,' and who has made all things, but has not himself been made. This Being seems never to have been represented by any material symbolical form. It is thought that he had no name, or, if he had, that it must have been unlawful either to pronounce or write it. He was a pure spirit, perfect in every respect, all-wise, almighty and supremely good.

"The gods of the popular mythology were understood in

the Esoteric religion to be either personified attributes of the Deity, or parts of the nature which he had created, considered as informed and inquired by him." *

The excellent collection of "The Egyptian and Assyrian Records of the Past" teems with monotheistic conceptions like: "Hail to the One in His Works, Single Among the Gods," "Chief of all the Gods," "Father of the Gods," "Lord of the Gods," "The One Maker of Existence," "The One alone without Peer." "The true King of Gods." †

The historian Prescott tried to show that the American aborigines were monótheists, and that they believed in the "Great Spirit" long before they had fetiches. A great many missionaries and travelers before Prescott were of the same opinion.‡

"While the mind," says Dr. Asa Mahan, "also intuitively distinguishes itself, as spirit, from all material existences around it, it can never, in its primary and intuitive procedures, apprehend this eternal verity, this unconditioned and universal cause of all conditional forms of being, as an inhering law or property of matter, but as, like itself, a free, self-conscious spirit, and as such, unlike the finite itself, and infinite and perfect mind. Unless mind itself is a lie, monotheism must have been the primitive religion of the race. It is a shallow, and unreflective and unobserving philosophy that represents the primitive race of mankind a realm of rational personalities, as void of religious ideas and sentiments, and then as ascending from fetichism through polytheism to monotheism. There is not a known fact in the history of the race to justify such a deduction. Polytheism

* History of Ancient Egypt, Vol. I., pp. 313-314, 1881.

† Volumes II., pp. 129-132; IV., pp. 90-100; VI., p. 100, etc.

‡ J. G. Mueller's Amerikanische Urreligionen.

and fetichism, on the other hand, are degenerate forms of original monotheism, the pure religion corrupted and 'spoiled by philosophy,' or by 'science falsely so called.' The cannibals of New Zealand and of the islands of the South Pacific are, many of them, to say the least, fetichists, and they are in the lowest state in which humanity has ever been found. The question is: Are they degenerates from a higher state of civilization, or are they at this point in the scale of ascent from a still lower stage? Many points of physical resemblance, as well as traditions and customs among them, absolutely evince the fact that they are degenerate descendants of a comparatively civilized people who formerly emigrated thither from Ceylon and Southern India. In India, for example, they have an annual festival in commemoration of the escape of Noah and his family in the Ark. The same custom obtains among these cannibals. They have not only a specific tradition of the Flood, but build vessels in imagined conformity to the ark in which Noah and his family escaped. The animals and reptiles which the people of India regard as sacred, these degenerate savages, in conformity with Egyptian custom, worship, not as supreme divinities, but as containing the spirits of finite, but higher, *genii*.*

The fact that the Bible starts, and is imbued, with the view that monotheism was precedent to polytheism, makes the evolution theory of Kuenen, as applied to the development of the biblical conception of God, untenable.

The Leyden School left out of view that there are also such agencies as "genius" and "intuition;" and where they are at work, the ideas come forth at once like a shining sun in all its splendor. This was the case with the prophetic

* A Critical History of Philosophy, Vol. I., pp. 129-130.

monotheism. The prophets, the representatives of the religious genius of the Hebrews, had pronounced the monotheistic idea hundreds of years before the large mass of people raised itself to that glorious height, from its polytheistic lowland. But the Leyden School does not always consider that. It frequently misrepresents the prophets as having shared the popular belief of the large mass of their contemporaries, while, in fact, they were the antagonists of the popular belief and were endeavoring to raise the people to their higher standard.

Every age has its fashions and its follies, and, again, every fashion and folly has its age. The theories of the Leyden School are no exception to that.

Dr. Wellhausen, inasmuch as he denied that the primitive phase of the Jahveh conception had any moral character, went a step farther than Kuenen.

In his article "Israel," in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, it reads as follows: "The essentially and necessarily rational character of the older phases of the religion of Jehovah completely disappears in the quite universal code of morals, which is given in the Decalogue as the fundamental law of Israel; but the entire series of religious personalities throughout the period of the Judges and Kings—from Deborah, who praised Jael's treacherous act of murder, to David, who caused his prisoners of war to be sawn asunder and burnt—make it very difficult to believe that the religion of Israel was, from the outset, one of specifically moral character. The true spirit of the old religion may be gathered much more truly from Judges v. than from Exodus xx."

By what right, or logic or experience can a sensible man think it proper to judge the moral spirit of a religion by some of the misdeeds and by the low moral standard of its followers? No unbiased, fair-minded man will think of

making the morality of the Christian religion responsible for the crimes and misdeeds of some Christians, but Dr. Wellhausen judges the moral character of the primitive conception of Jehovah by the wrongs of some individuals.

It is not necessary to refute Wellhausen by evidences from the Bible; it will suffice to adduce only two quotations from the works of two very prominent men of his party to show his position.

Professor Dr. Kuenen, who has never thought of denying Jehovah epithets, like "holy" and "righteous," says: "Jahveh is distinguished from the rest of the gods in that he will be served, not merely by sacrifices and feasts, but also—nay, in the first place, by the observance of the moral commandments, which form the chief contents of the ten words." *

From among the many passages in Robertson Smith's books testifying to the moral nature of the Jehovah conception in its earliest stages, the following one will suffice to show the great contradiction existing between the men of the Leyden School themselves: "There are many things in the social order of the Hebrews, such as polygamy, blood revenge, slavery and the treatment of enemies, which do not correspond with the highest ideal of morality, but belong to an imperfect social state, or, as the Gospel puts it, were tolerated for the hardness of the people's hearts."

"But, with all this, the religion of Jehovah put morality on a far sounder basis than any other religion did, because in it the righteousness of Jehovah as a God enforcing the known laws of morality was conceived as absolute, and as showing itself absolute, not in a future state, but upon earth. I do not, of course, mean that this high view of Jehovah's character was practically present to all his

* The Religion of Israel, I., 293.

worshippers. On the contrary, a chief complaint of the prophets is that it was not so, or, in other words, that Israel did not know Jehovah. But the higher view is never put forth by the prophets as a novelty: they regard it as the very foundation of the religion of Jehovah from the days of Moses downward, and the people never venture to deny that they are right. In truth, they could not deny it, for the history of the first creation of Israel, which was the fundamental evidence as to the true character of Jehovah's relations to his people, gave no room for such mythological conceptions as operate in the heathen religions, to make a just conception of the Godhead impossible. Heathen religions can never conceive their god as perfectly righteous, because they have a natural, as well as a moral, side, a physical connection with their worshippers, physical instincts, physical passions, etc.

"The Old Testament brings out this point with great force of sarcasm when Elijah taunts the prophets of Baal and suggests that their god may be asleep, or on a journey, or otherwise busied with some human avocation. In fact, all this was consistent with the nature of Baal. But the Hebrews knew Jehovah solely as the King and Judge of Israel. He was this and this alone; and, therefore, there was no ground to ascribe to him less than absolute righteousness. If the masses lost sight of those great qualities, and assimilated his nature to that of the Canaanite deities, the prophets were justified in reminding them that Jehovah was Israel's God before they knew Baalam, and that he then showed himself a God far different from these." *

It can not be doubted that the men of the Leyden School—Kuenen, Oort, Knappert, Wellhausen, Smith, Stade and

* Prophets of Israel, 73-74.

others—are great scholars. Nor can it be denied that their works contain a great many fine thoughts, original views, ingenious interpretations and a brilliant presentation of characters and topics. Nevertheless, the general and the characteristic ideas of their system are hypotheses and mistakes based upon detached passages and arbitrary constructions. It has been conclusively and irrefutably proved by Dr. Delitsch, Dr. Bredenkampf, Professor Green, Dr. Roos, Dr. Dillman, Dr. Kœnig and others that the theories of the Leyden School are objectionable, not merely from a dogmatical, but mainly from a scientific, standpoint.

THE GOD OF THE TALMUD.

There is no precedent in Jewish theology that God was named after a book. Besides the terms Jahveh, El, Elohim, Shaddai, etc., there are used in the Bible appellations like “God of Israel,” “God of the Hebrews,” “God of Life,” “God of all flesh,” “God of the forefathers,” “God, the Creator of the heavens and of the earth.”

The term, “God of the Bible,” is of recent date. It is a favorite with the Christian theologians. If there is no opposition to the use of the term “God of the Bible,” there can be no reasonable objection to the use of the term “God of the Talmud,” either. The Talmud has contributed a great deal to the store of the moral and speculative ideas about God. The finest chapter, the fifteenth, in Moses Mendelssohn’s *Morgenstunden*, in which the deficiencies and inadequacies of the philosophical theism are exposed, does not contain anything else but the Talmudical* theosophy, according to which the greatness of God consists in his condescension. A great many of the Talmudical sayings and hyperboles became,

* Megilla 31.

during the philosophical epoch, instrumental in the enlargement of the speculative conception of God among the Jews. The rabbis of the Talmud did not philosophize the way the Greeks did in applying sharp, logical methods, for the establishing of a solid speculative system. The rabbis wrapped their philosophy in figurative and hyperbolic language. Their views as to Providence and God's nature are often very striking and significant. Some of the rabbis were also skeptical, but less from metaphysical motives than from national misfortune and individual disappointments in their beliefs.

The history of the Talmudical conception of God commenced with the age of the Scribes, the Sofrim, the last editors and cannonizers of the Bible. According to the Talmud, these men have altered quite a number of biblical passages, for no other reason than because they and their generation were too far advanced in moral, aesthetical and speculative culture as to tolerate in their sacred literature offensive expressions. Thus, for instance, the original Hebrew text in Genesis read: "And God stood before Abraham." The Scribes reversed it into "And Abraham stood before God."

During the Alexandrian epoch speculation made rapid progress among the Jews. Not only at Alexandria did the Jewish philosopher, Aristobul, deem it advisable to add an introductory letter to the Septuaginta translation, explaining philosophically the meaning of the biblical anthropomorphisms and anthropopatisms, but it was also at Jerusalem where the high-priest, John Hyrcan, had to alter the temple liturgy on account of its gross anthropomorphisms. He abolished the Psalm (44): "O awake, O God, why dost thou sleep?" People had outgrown anthropomorphisms of that kind. The anti-anthromorphistic tendency was strong at that time, and it received the fullest expression and

sanction in the Chaldean Pentateuch translation of Onkelos, where the anthropomorphisms and anthropopathies are rendered by philosophical phrases.

Though in the main the Talmud proceeds in the narrative way of the Bible, it has ways and views of its own. Thus, the biblical teaching of the Divine Omnipresence it gives as the idea of the Divine Immanence: "God is the soul of the world; God permeates the world like the soul which permeates the body: God sees all, and is himself invisible, likewise is the soul; God sustains the world, and the soul sustains the body; God is pure, and so is the soul; God is concealed and revealed in the world, and so is the soul in the body." *

The rabbis considered God as being the soul of the world, but they did not consider the world as the body of God. God was to them the independent, free Being, ruling all.

By way of rational interpretation, the Talmud makes the biblical passages say what, originally, they certainly did not mean, for instance: "Rabbi Elieser said, 'Ever since the Decalogue was proclaimed, God does not interfere with the moral order, but leaves all to the principles of self-retribution.'" And this idea he derived from the Deuteronomic passage, "Behold! I lay before you life and death, the blessing and the curse!" If it is not claimed that this view contains the only mode of Divine retribution, then Rabbi Elieser's view is not objectionable at all.

Notably free is the view of Rabbi Simon ben Elieser, which reads: "The preponderance of mankind's merits or demerits decides its destiny" (Kiduschin); and so is the view of the Midrash Rabba in Leviticus, according to which

* Talmud Berach.

the passage, "If ye walk in my laws," refers to the "laws of nature."

The writers on gnosticism, the object of which is the reflection on the creation, on the government of the world, on the Divine nature, etc., can also find in the Talmud ample material. It is especially the attribution to God that figures there considerably. In Chagiga (xii.) it reads: "Ten attributes co-operated in God's creation: wisdom, reason, knowledge, strength, vocality, force, justice, righteousness, love and mercy;" and in Aboth Derabi Nathan (xxxvii.) it reads: "God was assisted in the creation of the world by seven attributes: knowledge, reason strength, vocality, justice, love and mercy."

This kind of gnosticism, which arose under the influence of the Alexandrian philosophy, and presents the Divine attributes as separate instrumentalities, was immediately condemned as heterogeneous, and startled the followers of the pure Jewish monotheism. They raised their voices in protest. The Talmud Yerushalmi * states that an anathema was hurled against a man who proceeded to give God too many attributes.

The "men of the great Synod"—started by Ezra—concluded that the adherents of pure monotheism shall give God not more than three attributes: God is *great, mighty and venerable*. These attributes, given at first to God by Moses, were introduced into the main part of the daily liturgy, the "Schemona Esra prayer." The Talmud Yoma sheds some light on this subject: "Moses said God is great, mighty and venerable; but Jeremiah, seeing the profanity the heathens committed in the temple, became a skeptic in God's venerability. Daniel, witnessing the destruction of

* Berah, IX., 1.

the sanctuary, doubted God's might. But the "men of the great Synod" argued that the real greatness, might and venerability of God consists in his nature of being slow to punish and long to suffer."

Rabbi Chanina argued against the attribution mania of his contemporaries by the following illustration: "It is an insult, and not an exaltation, to a king if he is praised for having silver money when it is expected of him to have immense sums of gold. So it is with God. All attribution of human language is not adequate to his real essence." *

The attribution mania was checked among the Jews when the Jew-Christians engrossed the Philonic *Logos* into the mediatorship of the "Son of God." Thus an extremity became a cure. Such extremity cures occur very frequently in the history of human aberration.

Those rabbis who have never been addicted to agnosticism consciously believed that God manifests himself under two attributes: *Middath Haddin* (Justice) and *Middath Rachmim* (mercy), and that he balances by means of these two attributes the iniquities of man, so that the human race be forgiven its sins and be preserved in existence.

The controversies and the polemical discussions of the Talmud are directed, not against atheism, but rather against the errors of the Greeks and Persians and against heretic conceptions of God.

Rabbi Abua, in refutation of the Persian dualism and the Christian Son-God, said: "God is one, the first and the last. He has no father, no brother and no son." †

The Talmud Yerushalmi points to it as to a merit that Judaism does not teach a mediator, and that everybody can

* Talmud, Megillah and Kethuboth. † Midrash Rab. Exodus xxix.

address himself directly to God, without the intercession of a mediator. This was said to dispute the Persian and the Christian mediatorships.

The Talmud speaks very frequently of the practical atheism (*Keilu Kofer Beiccar*). People who fly into anger, or who are proud, or who are deceitful, or who do wrong, are considered practical atheists.

As to the argumentation for the Divine existence, the Talmud refers, like the Bible, to the wonders of the creation and to the preservation and government of the world. Besides this, it contains some anecdotes like the following: "Rabbi Joshua would prove to a heathen the existence of God by telling him to look into the sun. The heathen replies, 'That would blind me.' 'Well,' said the rabbi, 'Behold, if you are unable to look into the sun, which is only a work of God, how can you be able to expect to see God himself?'"

The Midrasch Echa relates of a child, which, when asked where God was, replied: "First tell me where God is not."

THE GOD OF THE JEWISH METAPHYSICS.

The Jewish metaphysicians, though they believed in the unity, omnipotence, holiness and providence of God, in some respects differed in their conception of him from the Bible.

The biblical conception of God, being a poetical and a prophetic one, is that of the heart and of sound common sense, while the Jewish philosophers added also a speculative, metaphysical element to it.

When the Bible uses expressions like "the knowledge of God" or "Thou shalt know God," it does not mean any metaphysical knowledge *a la* Aristotle, but it has in view the

ways of Providence and the ethical nature of God as the protector of truth, justice, virtue and liberty.

The following biblical passages are proof of this :

The prophet Hosea, who pleaded so much in behalf of the knowledge of God, says (vi. 6) : " For piety I desire, and not sacrifice ; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings ; " and (iv. 1-2) he says : " Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel, for the Lord had a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor kindness, nor knowledge in the land ; " and in (ii. 21-22) it reads : " And I will betroth thee unto me forever ; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness and in justice, and in loving kindness and in memory ; and I will betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt *know* the Lord."

It is evident that the prophet Hosea did not consider ratiocination, or any metaphysical studies, necessary in preparation for the arrival at the knowledge of God. It is the moral qualification that he thought indispensable for a man to " know God."

The Jewish metaphysicians of the Middle Ages defended their metaphysical inquiries by referring to that classical passage in Jeremiah (ix. 22-23) : " Thus said the Lord : let not the wise glorify himself in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glorify himself in his might, nor let the rich man glorify himself in his riches ; but let him that glorieth himself glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth ; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord."

It is plain that this passage was abused, as it does not say anything that might indorse metaphysical inquiry, but on the

contrary, it is the apprehension of the moral nature of God that is called here "the knowledge of God."

A metaphysical conception of God is naturally antagonistic to anthropomorphisms.

Saadya, Bachya and Maimonides, whose conception of God was pre-eminently a metaphysical one, were antagonists to all anthropomorphisms, while Rabbi Abraham ben David, of Posquiere, and Rabbi Moses ben Chisdai Taku, who occupied more the biblical standpoint, believed in anthropomorphisms.

The question is in order: What did anthropomorphism mean to these last-named men? Did they take it in a literal sense? Did they really believe that God is a corporeal Being?

It was only their antagonists, who from partisanship imputed such a belief to them.

The truth is, the Jewish anthropomorphists believed in the infinity of God, and applied to God all the biblical passages bearing upon the spirituality of God just as well as their antagonists, the followers of Maimonides, did; but, as the Cabbalists, Rabbi Joseph Gikatalia, the author of the *Schaareh Orah*, and Rabbai Mair Ibn Gabai, the author of the "*Abodath Haccodesh*, remark, the difference between these two parties consisted, plainly in this:

The Jewish metaphysicians gave the anthropomorphisms of the Bible a philosophical interpretation, and the metaphysical idea that they derived in that way they considered the only and the real meaning of the respective anthropomorphistic expressions of the Bible; while the anthropomorphists held that the Bible, having a mystical background, is inexhaustible in ideas, and that the biblical anthropomorphisms have a great many meanings and references

besides those rational views derived from them by the philosophers, even if those views were true.

The anthropomorphists did not protest so much against the rational views of the philosophers as against their sweeping judgments that their ideas are the only ones meant by the Bible, to the exclusion of the mystical theory altogether.

The struggle of the anthropomorphists against the philosophers was not a struggle of the literal belief in anthropomorphisms with rational ideas, *but a struggle of mysticism against metaphysics.*

The gnostics of the Talmud rejected the anthropomorphisms only as far as they were offensive to their philosophically-trained sense, while the Jewish philosophers of the Arabic-Spanish epoch rejected the anthropomorphisms as being incongruous with their metaphysical conception of God. The Talmudists were opposed to the rejection of the anthropomorphisms, not, as some think, because they believed in their literal meaning, but because it involved part of their mystical theory, which in fact was the philosophy they believed in.

The argumentation for the existence of God was in use even during the biblical epoch, when polytheism had yet a strong hold on the people.

The Psalm 94 contains a teleological and moral proof of the divine existence: "He that hath planted the ear, shall he not hear? Or, he that hath formed the eye, shall he not see? He that admonished nations, shall he not correct?" Vestiges of the teleological proof in the book of Job, "From my flesh I see the Almighty," and in Isaiah, "Lift your eyes and behold who has created these—the sun, the stars, planets"—are a trace of a cosmological argument.

An argumentation presented in regular philosophical form

was produced among the Jews, first by Philo, of Alexandria. His teleological argument reads as follows :

“ If any one comes into a well-ordered city, in which all parts of the constitution are exceedingly well regulated and arranged, what other idea will he entertain but that the city is governed by wise and virtuous rulers? He, therefore, who comes into that which is truly the greatest of cities, namely, this world, and beholds all the land, both the mountains and the campaign district full of animals and plants, and streams of rivers both overflowing and depending on the winter floods ; and the steady flow of the sea, and the admirable temperature of the air, and the varieties and the regular revolutions of the seasons of the year, and then, too, the sun and the moon, the rulers of day and night, and the revolution and regular motion of all the other planets and fixed stars, and the whole heaven ; would he not naturally, or I should rather say, of necessity, conceive a notion of the Father and the Creator and Governor of all this system? For there is no artificial work whatever which exists of its own accord. And the world is the most artificial and skillfully made of all works, as if it had been put together by some one who was altogether accomplished and most perfect in knowledge. It is in this way that we have received the idea of the existence of God.”*

Philo was of the opinion that there are four ways to arrive at the knowledge of God : The phenomena of nature, self-knowledge, the moral principles and the ecstasy.

The morning star on the horizon of Jewish philosophy was Saadya Gaon, of Fayum, in Egypt (892-942). Being a Mutazilite he reduced all the attributes which were to define the conception of God to three : God is a *living*, a *mighty*, and a

wise Being, whose attributes and essence are in perfect unity. But Saadya gave no attention to the proofs of the Divine existence. This was done first by his contemporary, Rabbi Bachya Ibn Pekudah, the author of the "*Chobath Halwoth*."

Bachya was also the first Jewish metaphysician who advocated the use of negative attributes, they being more proper than the positive ones. No Jewish theologian before him enunciated so emphatically that the word "*Echod*," "God is One," must be taken neither in the numerical nor in the individual sense, but that it means a metaphysical and substantial unit. The Jewish orthodoxy rejects this definition as heretical, and holds that the term "God is one" means "he is incomparable." Bachya was of the opinion that a pure conception of God can be expected only of prophetically-inspired or philosophically-trained people, while the large bulk of people worship a Supreme Being, of whose true nature they have no idea.

Bachya's argumentation for the Divine existence reads essentially as follows:

a. Every existence has either produced itself or was produced by some outside cause. Now, to assume that the world can have produced itself is absurd, because it would have had to exist before it existed, consequently it must be produced by an outside cause.

b. Following up the train of effects and causes, we are bound to assume a cause that is the parent of all causes and effects.

c. It may be remonstrated that the world is its own cause. This is inadmissible, as the world is composed of compounds; and these compounds presuppose something that is elementary and simple, prior to all compounds. This

simple elementary something, that is prior to all compounds, is God.

d. The elements that compose the world are of an antagonistical nature, like fire and water, and still they constitute a harmonious and beautiful world. This they can not do of themselves. There must be a Being that enabled them to do that.

Bachya thinks that people who believe that this harmonious and beautiful world has been arranged and is regulating itself by mere chance, are just as mindless as if they believed that the water-works, artificially made for the irrigation of a fine park, made themselves; or as if they believed that the mere spilling of ink upon paper will produce characters like those which were made by a careful and skillful calligrapher.*

Next to Bachya comes Abraham Ibn Daud. of Toledo (1110–1180), the author of the philosophical book, “The Sublime Faith” (*Emunah Rama*). His argumentation for the Divine existence is in essence as follows: The world must have a prime cause, which exists of necessity and implies all perfection. Such a being that exists of necessity is independent of all existences, while all depend upon it. In this argumentation, the idea of a necessary existence stands for the cosmological, and the idea of perfection for the ontological. proof. Abraham Ibn Daud did not yet draw a line of separation between these two arguments

The prince of the Jewish metaphysicians was Moses Maimonides (1135–1204). Before his tribunal anthropomorphism found no mercy. As an iconoclast, he surpassed all his predecessors. Under the ægis of the Chaldean Pentateuch translation, by Unkelos, which gives

*Chobath Halwowoth I., VI.

the anthropomorphisms and anthropopathies of the Pentateuch in philosophical paraphrases, and under the aegis of some speculative views of the Talmud and Midrash, he interpreted the anthropomorphism and anthropopathies of the Bible in a speculative sense.

He thought that all that is considered a perfection in the eyes of the people, they ascribe to God and keep away only what, according to their notions, would be an imperfection in the Divine nature.*

Believing that "silence is the most becoming praise of God," Maimonides was opposed to all attribution. He fully agreed with the Talmudist, Rabbi Chanina, that the more attributes there are given to God, the more is left in God to be attributed. But as attribution is necessary for practical religious purposes, he adopted the four attributes: God is *living, mighty, wise* and *willing*, because they are the least anthropomorphistic and the most expressive of the Divine relation to the creation.

These attributes, Maimonides thought, mean something quite different when given to God than when given to man and that there was absolutely no resemblance between that which they mean when applied to God and that when applied to man. Maimonides was right in so far as in God *life, wisdom, power* and *will* are not, as in man, accidental properties, but properties of necessity. However, from a Jewish standpoint, he was an erratic in maintaining that there is, even as to the essence, absolutely no resemblance between the wisdom, will, life and might of God and that of man. If wisdom, will, life and might mean anything real, and, if these terms are no misnomers, they must mean the same thing in God that they mean in man. The differ-

* Moreh Nebuchim, I., 36, 46-47.

ence must consist merely in the conditions, in the degree of perfection and in the magnitude of scale.

God is eternal, means, as Maimonides defines it, negatively, that he is not dependent on time. God is one, negatively defined, means that he is incomparable. God is wise, means that the world is not ruled by chance; and God is living, means that he is not lifeless, as the elements, and that he needs no subsistence. God knows all individuals and bodies by knowing the monads and generalities of their existence. The world and its course being God's embodied plan, can not increase his knowledge. God knows all that is to come when it is yet potential.

The climax of the conception of God consists, as Maimonides thinks, in the comprehension of God as the knowing one, the knowledge and the known one in perfect unity.

God's omnipotence is restricted by his wisdom, and, accordingly, there are impossibilities, even for God. God can not make another god equal to him; God can not become a man; God can not make a triangle to be a quadrangle, etc.

As to Providence, Maimonides believes that God, being the knowing one, the knowledge and the known one in perfect unity, must know all in general and in particular. The special providence extends only to the individuals of the human race, but not also to animals and plants, which, having no reason, no moral and no spiritual properties, are preserved only by God's general providence, as manifested in the preservation of the species.*

Regarding the design in the universe, Maimonides holds that man can not know exactly what, taken in general, it may be; but he does not doubt that there is a design in the

* *Moreh Nebuchim*, III., 17.

universe corresponding to the Divine wisdom, and that there are designs in the structures of the creatures, which, in any human production, would be called *wisdom*.

The Muttakalims have not favored the term of a "first cause," as from that term implying the necessary existence of a being, which is at the outset and the bottom of all secondary causes, they thought follows more the idea that God's relation to the world is not perfectly free. They would substitute for it the term "first activity." But Maimonides thought they overlooked that the term "first cause" implied, not merely the efficient, but also the formal and the final cause, and that only if God is the efficient, the formal and the final cause, it can be truly said of him that he is indispensable for the world's existence. Should God be merely the "first activity," then the products might outlast that activity.*

As to the argumentation for the Divine existence, Maimonides produced, in the second part of the "More Nebuchim," the proofs which were current among the Arabic metaphysicians of his day.

a. (*The Cosmological Proof*.) According to the twenty-fifth of the twenty-six premises of his cosmological inquiry, the world must have a *prime motor*. The existence of this prime motor Maimonides tries to prove by the assumption of the following four cases: This prime motor must be either in or outside the world. If this prime motor is in the world, then it is either divisible or indivisible. But if the motive power is outside the world, then it is either a body or a mind separated from the world.

Of these four cases, the first one can not be, because a divisible force means—according to the twelfth premise—

* Moreh Nebuchim, I., 69, III. 13.

a final force, but such a force can not produce an infinite motion. The second case can not be, because an indivisible force like man's soul, is set in motion accidentally by the matter; but such an accidental motion—according to the eighth premise—must come sooner or later to a standstill. The third case can not be, because a corporeal motor is a compound presupposing another motor *ad infinitum*. Consequently the motion of the world can be accounted for only with the fourth case, by mind independent of the material world.

b. (*The Ontological Argument*.) The things of the world being transient and vain, have the possibility of non-existence, and, consequently, at a certain time, they have not existed at all. Now, if at the time when these things of the transient world have not existed, there had not been something higher than that transient world, they certainly would not have come into existence. But as the things of the transient world exist, they do so only through a Being which has no accidental, but a necessary, existence, and that necessarily existing being is God.

A necessarily existing being is that which is so perfect and absolute that it does not depend on any conditions. Its non-existence can not be imagined, as it combines all possible and imaginable perfection.

There are people who ask: "If God has created the world, who has created God?" Only secondary causes are produced, but God, as a prime cause which unites all perfections, exists necessarily. The ontological proof, in its real and correct meaning, answers the question: "Who created God?"

The arguments of Maimon's were attacked by Chisdai Crescas (1340-1410), the great Jewish metaphysician, who was the first to undermine the authority of Aristotle by an

exposition of the fallacies in the system of that great Stagyrite.

Crescas' attacks upon Maimon's proofs do not amount to much, as they concern merely the formalities, but not the ideas proper.

Crescas believes that the existence of the first cause, which is independent of all, but upon which all that is caused depends, is above any doubt. He finds more difficulty in finding out and in knowing something about God's nature and essence, and also whether there is really only *one* God.

A new argument for the existence of God was produced by Moses Mendelssohn. He sets it forth as follows: "He who has an idea of the concatenation and connection of the truths and of the unfathomable depth of knowledge, will admit that none of them can be known perfectly and clearly except by a being that is perfect.

"The perfect Being that knows not only man with all his criteria and qualities, but that knows also the summary of all potentialities as potential and the essence of all actualities and realities as actual and real—in short, that knows perfectly the sum total, the essence and the concatenation of all truths, in all their possible and actual developments, is the Infinite Mind."*

This argument starts with the imperfection of man's self-knowledge and is based upon the relation, conversion, development and nature of all potentialities, realities, actualities and truths. They force upon man's mind the idea that there must be a being that knows them all in all, their connections and relations.

A very interesting case occurred in the beginning of the

* *Morgenstunden*, XVI.

eighteenth century in London. The very orthodox rabbi, David Nieto, startled his congregation by the remark that "God and nature were identical." The Amsterdam rabbi, Hirsh Ashkenasi, whose opinion on the subject was solicited, could not see anything wrong in Nieto's expression. He argued that as the term "nature" admits of more than one definition, the congregation must not take it just in the pantheistic sense. He referred them to precedents in the book "Cusari" (I., 71-80), by Juda Halevi (1080), and in the book "Schelah," by Jesaia Hurwitz, where the identification of the terms "nature and God" does not mean to exclude the conception of a holy, self-existing, free, supreme Being*.

Rabbi Ashkenasi's decision is in accord with the views of John Scotus Erigena. This great mediæval metaphysician (815) analyzed the manifestations of nature into that form which creates, but is not created; then into that form which is both creating and created; further, into that form which creates and is created, and, finally, into that form which neither creates nor is created.

The first and the fourth of these cases relate to God as manifested in the creation, while the second and the third cases refer to the creation.

In this sense, the term "nature" applied to God does not mean a negation of God, but God as the natural cause of the existence and activity of nature.

Some good ideas are contained in Rabbi Dr. Ludwig Philipson's theodicy, "Wider den Unglauben."

The common characteristic of nature, human mind and history is that they all are subjected to the reign of law.

Nature is infinite and immeasurable, and yet all its parts form a unity effected by means of light and gravity. Light

* Chacham Zebi Rabbin. Respon., XVIII.

reaches the widest distances and makes the science of astronomy possible. The gravitation keeps all cosmical bodies together in their places and courses. Besides the laws of light and gravitation, the laws of changeableness, interdependence, rise, development and decay are general laws, to which all organic, as well as inorganic, objects are subjected

The laws of nature, what are they?

Philipson answers: They are the thoughts according to which all that exists arises, develops, influences and perishes. There must be something that has devised these thoughts and that has actualized them. *That* something is the highest universal reason—God.

As to the human soul, Dr. Philipson thinks that God has put it as something, unconscious into the cell, that it develops into consciousness, operates in the human body, and departs according to a Divine plan. The whole nature of the human soul is such that it can not originate from mere matter, and, consequently, presupposes a Divine Being.

Concerning history, Dr. Philipson's view is that the first glance at the universal history would make man inclined to believe that the only law of history is that expressed in Ecclesiastes: "One generation comes and passes, but the earth lasts forever."

However, a closer and deeper inquiry into the records of history shows that history is ruled by laws like the law of the westward migrations, or the laws of international alliance, by means of gain, thirst for power, religion, industry, commerce and science.

These laws show that history is an organism and subjected to the laws of development.

That development has not always a progressive tendency.

As soon as nations have fulfilled their missions, they have to make room for others, who also have missions. The intervals of such epochs are ages of darkness and confusion.

Dr. Philipson concludes his argument with the remark that mankind is created for a purpose, for a certain plan, which it has to realize.

Mankind is a collective body that arose, exists and develops according to laws and ideas, which presuppose a lawgiver and a deviser—God.

A scholarly theodicy and a masterly refutation of the materialistic, pessimistic and atheistic systems of the day is "The Cosmic God," by Rabbi Dr. I. M. Wise, President of the Hebrew Union College, in Cincinnati.

Free from all sophistry, Dr. Wise made it his object "to find truth by the instrumentality of inductive philosophy, and to ascertain, after a fair and full consideration of the philosophy and the sciences of the nineteenth century, what remains to be held up as the religious doctrine of honest and intelligent people, without conflict with the intelligence of this enlightened and progressive age, and what remains to be constructed into the religion of the future generation."

Having enumerated and refuted all the specious arguments of the advocates of the theory of efficient causes, Dr. Wise comes to the conclusion (page 125) that "This truth of teleology is, first, in the human intellect spontaneously. Since man exists he has sought cause behind each effect, although he did not always succeed in finding the correct one, and has always expected the same effect from the same cause. He must have always considered this law universal; it must be in the intellect. Experience teaches the law of isolated cases; its universality is spontaneous in the intellect. None can think of a human intellect in unobstructed activity without this synthetical

truth, which is one of its attributes, manifested in the lowest, as in the highest, processes of reason. Therefore intellect and law of causality are inseparable.

“This truth is, secondly, in all nature outside of the human intellect, confirmed by all human knowledge, observation, experience and experiments, as far as science has penetrated into the mysteries of existence. Here is already something universal in nature outside of the human intellect, which is also in it—the law of causality, and it is the essentiality and motor power of both. This law in man is in his intellect and inseparable from it; hence, this same law in nature, outside of man, must be in an intellect. Well, then, here we have already an intellect in nature outside of man.

“The law of causality being admitted, we all agree that nothing in this universe stands above or beyond the law. But as the forces and elements are heterogeneous, and each follows its own law or laws, still the universe, as far as we know, is one in order and harmony; the forces of nature must either converge to the one single purpose of sustaining permanently this order and harmony, or one superior force must control all of them, or else there must be continual conflicts in nature among elements and forces; which we know is not the case. Consequently there is co-operation, co-ordination and subordination in nature, which is its law of laws, or force of forces. Illustrate so: All parts constituting a body, be it a man, a bird, a house a factory, an earth, or a sun, must be harmonious in their co-ordination and subordination, and thus co-operate continually to make the existence of that respective body possible. If a wheel or a screw in a machine is not constructed according to the law governing the whole machine, the order and harmony thereof is destroyed. If the heart of a human

being be too large, or his stomach too small, relatively, according to the law governing his whole organism, then the order and harmony thereof are destroyed. It is universally so, although each part of every body is governed by its own laws, the whole, as a unit, must be governed by a superior force, or the various forces must converge in this one particular point of sustaining intact that particular unit or body.

“Here, then, is teleology, here are final causes. In every unit you may single out in this universe, infusorium or man, fungus or palm-tree, crystal or sun, there is final cause before you, there is teleology, there is end, aim, purpose and design. And if you then rise from the individual objects to the universe as a unit, you have before you always the same teleology, the same end, aim, purpose and design of preserving the whole intact as a harmonious unit. There is the same final cause in the grand totality of nature as in every minute object thereof.”

Regarding the historical proof, Dr. Wise asks: “Is there teleology and final cause in history? Is end, aim, object, design, purpose and proper execution discernible in the history of man, or is the human family drifting upon the boundless ocean of existence without any ultimate purpose? If there is teleology in history, then the question arises by what force or forces, power or powers? It is evident, to my mind, that there is teleolgy in history, and by a super-human power.”

The general principles which, according to Dr. Wise, rule the history of the human race, are: “Every continuous cause and effect in nature is teleology resulting continually in teleological centers, which every individual being is.
* * * What is true in nature must also be true in history. The same chain of cause and effect must also be teleological,

and each state of society, every day, every hour and at every place, must be a teleological center."

"Each state of society becomes the cause of the succeeding one, and so on to the supposed end of history; hence the whole chain is logical and teleological." (134.)

"There is a perpetual progression in history from lower to higher conditions, exactly as in the earth's creation. There are breaks, violent catastrophes and eruptions in the earth's crust, and there are also in history apparently illogically, bloody and disturbing eruptions, cessations and retrogressions, momentarily and locally; but in the totality of history, the progression from lower to higher conditions is perpetual, incessant and logical." (137.)

"The first general principle of the Logos of history must be, it preserves, utilizes and promulgates all that is good, true and useful, neutralizes all that is wicked, false and useless or nugatory; exactly as the extra-organic will and intellect works in the organic kingdoms." (138.)

"The Logos of history manifests its extra-human existence also in the inevitable punishment of national sins. As nature, everywhere and inexorably, punishes every transgression against the physical laws, so the Logos of history dispenses just retribution for national misdeeds." (141.)

"The next phenomena in which the Logos of history manifests itself is most extraordinary: its name is Genius. The existence of genius and its appearance at the right place and time is as mysterious as the center of the universe. Genius is the superior spontaneity of the mind in productive and executive powers; it conceives not by act of violation or tiresome reflection, but feeling, generally and unsolicited; it conceives finished and complete thoughts, schemes, designs or images of universal truth, irresistible impulses to execute or realize, utter and promulgate." (144-145.)

Dr. Wise's "Cosmic God" is a product of much reading and careful reflection, and its illustrations from history, natural sciences and life are well-chosen, striking and instructive.

An attempt to identify the Jewish Monotheism and the modern Monism was made by Rabbi Dr. Ruelf, in his pamphlet "Der Einheitsgedanke," 1880. He was apparently swayed by the error that Monism is more rational and more in accord with science than Monotheism.

With regard to "the unity of nature," meaning that nature is a Whole ruled by the same laws everywhere, and that its elements and forces are convertible into one another, there is nothing more obvious, more rational and more in accord with science than the Monotheism teaching that God is the cause of that "unity of nature."

Dr. Ruelf in his zeal to show that God, the human soul and force, were everything, depicts the world, the human body and matter so very transient, non-substantial and accidental that, without being aware of it, he drifted into Acosmism.

Judaism is neither Acosmism nor Monism; and Spinozism is Monism, but no Acosmism. It was Moses Mendelssohn who defended Spinoza against the charge of Acosmism in stating the difference that exists between Leibnitz and Spinoza. Leibnitz assumed that the world had a two-fold, a potential and a visible existence. The world existed potentially when it was a mere idea in God's mind; but its visible existence commenced when it was the will of God that it should exist outside of his mind. Spinoza's theory is that the world has always been visible and has always been in God. A world that has always existed in a visible form in God can be no Acosmism.

It is indeed noteworthy that while in the last century even Moses Mendelssohn, though he thought that the "re-

finer Spinozism" is compatible with all practices of religion and ethics, was very anxious to defend his great friend, Ephraim G. Lessing, against the charges of Spinozism, it becomes in this century a favorite idea with a great many prominent Jewish theologians to identify the Jewish Monotheism with Spinozism.

The first one to pronounce the Jewish Monotheism fully in accord with Spinozism was Dr. Mair Letteris. (Biccure Haittim, 1846.) In his steps followed Rabbi Abraham Krochmal (Eben Horosch), Dr. Salomon Rubin (Teshuba Nizachath), Rabbi Senior Sachs (Hatechiyah I., II.), Professor Dr. M. Joel (Zur Genesis der Lehre Spinoza's, 1871) and others.

These scholars were induced to identify Spinozism and Monotheism by the great resemblance of certain expressions, metaphors and ideas in the works of Spinoza with those in the works of his Jewish predecessors, Salomon Ibn Gebirol (1020-1070), Abraham Ibn Esra (1088-1167), Moses Maimonides (1135-1204), Levy Gerson (1288-1340), Chisdai Crescas (1340-1410), Abraham Herera (1640) and others.

Ideas, metaphors and expressions, so they argue, which are not objectionable when in the works of Gebirol and others, must not be considered objectionable when advanced and used by Spinoza.

It is true, Spinoza has, in common with Ibn Gebirol and Ibn Esra the Monism; with Moses Maimonides, the idea that there is absolutely no resemblance between what an attribute means when applied to God and when applied to man;* with Levi Gerson the idea of the eternity of the world; with Abraham Herera (whose book, "Porta Cœli," was

*Maimonides' Moreh Nebuchim, I., 52; Spinoza's Ethics I., prop. XVII.

translated from Spanish into Hebrew by Spinoza's teacher, Rabbi Isaac Aboab), the idea that God was necessitated to act by his own nature,—but from all this it does not follow that any of all these predecessors of Spinoza was a Spinozist. None of them drew inferences from these ideas to such an extent, nor did any one of them apply these ideas as he did without any regard to the reconciliation with Judaism or the practices of any religion.

Spinoza deviated from all Jewish philosophers by the negation of final causes; by the assertion that God was necessitated by his nature to produce the world as it is; by the negation of man's free will and by the negation of the human soul as self-existent. Spinoza's psychology is a mere description of man's passions, emotions and intellect.

As great as the difference is between the theory of the efficient causes and that of the final causes; between the biblical idea, "that God saw all he made and it was very good," and the Brahmanic idea, "as the cob-web comes from the spider, the tree from the seed, the fire from coal, the stream from the well, so does the world emanate from Brahma without that he knows it;" between that idea that man has a free will, and can choose and act accordingly, and the idea that man has in his actions no more choice than a "stone that is hurled;" and between the idea that man's soul is self-existing, and the idea that man's soul is nothing but the intellectual and emotional function of the human nature, *just so great is the difference between Judaism and Spinozism.*

VII. THE ARGUMENTATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

*“ Verius enim cogitatur deus, quam dicitur et verius est quam cogitatur.” **

The conception of the Old Testament, that God is the Creator, the Ruler, the Preserver of all, and the common Father of the whole human race, was made the cornerstone of Christianity.

The primitive Christian Church was not in need of any philosophical argumentation for the Divine existence. The Jews, to whom the advocates of Christianity addressed themselves, believed in God, and the heathens could be converted to the belief in God only the way in which the idolatrous Hebrews were by the prophets, through appeals to the inborn religious sentiment, by plain references to the wonders and impressions of the world, and by an exposition of the follies of idolatry.

The philosophical argumentation for the Divine existence was not favored much in the primitive church. Even such fathers of the church as Clement and his disciple, Origenes, both men of a high philosophical culture and the authors of gnosticism, were opposed to it, because they thought that God must not be considered and treated as a scientific subject. They held that the idea of God is inborn in man, and

* Augustus de Trinit, VII , 7.

that man can not liberate himself from it, however much he would like to do so.

The fathers of the church who first advanced proofs of the Divine existence were Athenagoras and Theophilus, and they did so merely to exonerate Christianity from the charge of atheism brought against it for not prescribing animal offerings. In the apology, "Legatio pro Christianis," addressed to the Roman Emperor, Marc Aurel, and his son, Commodus, Athenagoras, Professor at Alexandria, refuted that accusation.

The other one, Theophilus, Bishop of Antiochia, claimed that the beauty and the wise arrangement of the world would suffice to prove the Divine existence, were it not that man, being corrupt and sinful, needs, on that account, besides a natural, also a supernatural revelation.

The first father of the Christian Church strongly in favor of philosophical arguments was Athanasius, in the fourth century Archbishop of Alexandria, called also, on account of his strong antagonism to Arianism, "the father of orthodoxy." The creation he considered an evidence of the existence of God; and all that was said to the contrary by the Epicureans, ascribing all to mere chance and atoms, he considered absurd and in contradiction to the facts of experience. The world was, in his opinion, made imperfect for no other reason but that it should not be identified with God himself.*

Much thought was given to the conception of God by Augustinus (born 354 in Africa), one of the greatest, most learned, most philosophical and most productive men of the Christian Church. Though his general views on God were those of Plato, still he was an independent thinker and

* Dr. Alzog's Grundriss der Patrologie, 1869.

had a great many ideas of his own. He thought that man can know only what God is not, and what he can not know of him.* By this negative way of inquiry into the idea of God, there is admitted that the human soul can know, at least, something of him and of his nature, and, consequently, his invocation is warranted. In definition of what we know of God, he states that God is the supreme Will, Reason, Might, Being, and all that is and contains any truth. These attributes are in God inseparable, and are one with his essence. God's greatness is his wisdom, and his goodness is also his wisdom, so that all these attributes are mere modifications and manifestations of his Divine Being.† God is the principle which made all, and keeps all the way it is and works. The term "essence" he considers more applicable to God than the term "substance."‡ Augustinus does not like the idea of calling God the soul of the universe, nor did he approve of the idea that the essential parts of the human soul constitute the Supreme Being.§

Regarding the argumentation for the Divine existence, Augustinus deserves special attention, as he has not merely reproduced the proofs of the ancient metaphysicians, but he has advanced an entirely new proof. He is the father of the ontological argument, which was later developed by, and accredited to, Anselm of Canterbury. This proof Augustinus styled "*the argument of the supreme truth.*" The supreme truth is above all that is corporeal. Reason compels us to think that there is something that is the highest, the best and the last ; now, that can only be either that supreme truth, or there must be something higher yet than that supreme truth. In either case that highest is God.

* De Ord., II., 47. † Solilo., I., 3; De Trinitate, VI. ‡ De Trinitate, III. § De Divi., IV., 12, 13.

Besides this, he argues the existence of God from the deficiency of the world, which presupposes a more perfect being, and also from the craving of man after a chief good. Were there not such a chief good—God—man would not be constituted with a longing for it.*

The rest of the fathers of the church did only reproduce what Augustinus was teaching. The last one of these, John of Damascus (died 755), whose authority even some Protestants respect, was of the opinion that the miracles of the Bible were the best evidences of the existence of God. It is only a pity that he forgot to prove conclusively that the miracles of the Bible really took place, and that they occurred in a really miraculous way.

Albertus Magnus, the greatest Aristotelian of the mediæval church and one of the greatest Christian theologians, reproduced the arguments of Augustinus and added to them a new one, derived from the distinction he made between "being" and "essence."

The "*real being*" implies both the being and the essence. Being exists of necessity. Its existence is inconceivable. Such a being must be attributed to God. Only a non-being would imply the non-existence of God. It is impossible to think of a non-being as prior to the being, for the very idea of non-existence presupposes an existence. Man can not comprehend God, for man is finite, and a finite man, as a matter of course, can not comprehend the infinite Supreme Being. †

This proof of Albertus Magnus, that non-being was inconceivable, was rejected by his disciple, Thomas Aquino, and for no other reason but because, in the second verse of

* Dr. H. Ritter's *Geschichte der Christlichen Philosophie*, II.

† Dr. Ritter, *Geschichte der Christlichen Philosophie*, IV.

the fifty-second Psalm, "The fool saith in his heart there is no God," the non-existence of God is said to be conceivable. More acumen and philosophy than in this, Aquino showed in the following five arguments he treats of:

His first argument was that of Aristotle that there must be a first motor.

His second argument was that there must be a first cause.

His third argument is derived from the nature of a necessary being. All things can not be accidental, for if all things were accidental, then there must have been a time when they did not exist; and if there was a time when nothing existed, that time would have lasted until now; for nothing can come into existence except through something already in existence. But it being untrue that nothing exists at present, consequently not all things can be accidental: there must be something that is necessary. That something necessary, being the cause of all existence, is God.

His fourth argument is that of *via eminentiæ*, meaning that there are all degrees of goodness, truthfulness and nobleness. Now, that degree of these perfections which is the highest, is the source and the compass of them all, and that is God.

His fifth argument was that the irrational creatures, though without reason, show a conduct that is guided, not by chance, but according to a principle implanted in their nature; and the being that made it so, is God.

In the course of his reflections on God, the idea of the "unknowable" occurred to his mind, and he opposed this theory for two reasons:

Man is destined to be happy, but no real happiness is possible without the knowledge of God.

Man is a religious being; an irresistible craving after God is implanted in him, and this would not be the case were it not possible to know God.

Aquino maintained that God was only incomprehensible, but not unknowable.*

Among the latter Christian theologians, it was especially the grandiloquent French preacher, Bossuet (born 1629), and his contemporary, the French bishop, Fenelon, who gave much attention to the proofs of the Divine existence.

Bossuet has not produced anything new in this line. He has merely amalgamated the metaphysical ideas of Plato, Augustinus and Aquino with the philosophy of Descartes and Malebranche. His views are solid and manifest moderation and much sound, common sense. Bossuet was not merely one of the greatest pulpit orators that ever lived, but he was also one of the most solid minds and a great scholar.

Some of his best remarks in one of his master works, *Traite de la Connaissance de Dieu et de Soi-meme*, reads as follows: "There is nothing that is more fit to elevate the soul to God than the knowledge of herself and of her intellectual operations. We have already remarked that the understanding has eternal verities for its object. The standards by which we measure all things are eternal and invariable. * * * We know clearly that everything in the universe is made according to proportion, from the greatest to the least, from the strongest to the weakest, and we well know that these proportions are related to the principles of eternal truth. All that is demonstrated in mathematics and in any other science whatever, is eternal and immutable, since the effect of the demonstration is to show that the thing can not be otherwise than it is demon-

* Ch. Jourdain, *La Philosophie de Saint Tom. d'Aquino*, 1858.

strated to be. So, in order to understand the nature and the properties of things, which I know, for example, a triangle, a square, a circle, or the relation of these figures, and all other figures, to each other, it is not necessary that I should find such in nature, and I may be sure that I have never traced, never seen any that are perfect. Neither is it necessary that I should think that there is motion in the world, in order to understand the nature of motion itself, or that the lines which every motion describes, and the hidden proportions according to which it is developed. When the idea of these things is once awakened in my mind, I know that, whether they have an actual existence or not, they must be; that it is impossible for them to be of another nature, or to be made in a different way.

“To come to something that concerns us more nearly, I mean by these principles of eternal truth, that they do not depend on human existence; that so far as he is capable of reasoning, it is the essential duty of man to live according to reason and to search for his Maker, through fear of lacking the recognition of his Maker, if in fault of searching for him he should be ignorant of him. All these truths, and all those which I deduce from them by reasoning, exist independent of all time.

“In whatever time I place human understanding, I will know them, but in knowing them I *will find them* truths; I will *not make* them such, for our cognitions do not make their objects, but suppose them. So these truths subsisted before all time, before the existence of a human understanding, and were everything that is made according to the laws of proportion—that is to say, everything that I see in nature—destroyed except myself, these laws would be preserved in my thought, and I would clearly see that they

would always be good and always true, were I also destroyed with the rest.

“I seek *how, where, and in what* they subsist, eternal and immutable. As they are, I am obliged to avow the existence of a being in whom truth is eternally subsisting, in whom it is always understood, and this being must be truth itself, and must be all truth; and it is from Him that truth is in everything that exists.

“It is *He*, in a certain measure, who is incomprehensible to me. It is in Him, I say, that I see the eternal truths; and, to see them is to turn to Him, who is immutably all truth and to receive his light.

“This eternal object is God, eternally subsisting, eternally true, eternal truth itself. * * * It is in this eternal Being that these eternal truths subsist. It is also by this that I see them. * * * These eternal verities, which every understanding always perceives the same and by which every understanding is governed, are something of God, or rather, are God himself.

Chapter xxxvii.: “Since there is nothing eternal, immutable and independent but God alone, we must conclude that these truths do not subsist in themselves, but in God alone and in his eternal ideas, which are nothing else than himself.

“There are those who, in order to verify these eternal truths which we have proposed, and others of the same nature, have figured to themselves eternal essences aside from deity—a pure delusion, which comes from not understanding that in God, as in a source of being, and in his understanding, where resides the art of making and ordering all things, are found primitive ideas, or, as St. Augustine says, the eternally subsisting reason of things. Thus in the thought of the architect is the primitive idea of a house

which he perceives in himself; this intellectual house would not be destroyed by any ruin of houses built according to this interior model; and if the architect were eternal, the idea and the reason of the house would also be eternal.

“But, without recurring to the mortal architect, there is an immortal architect, or rather, a primitive, eternally subsisting art in the immutable thought of God, where *all order, all measure, all rule, all proportion, all reason*, in a word, *all truth*, are found in their origin. * * * For if, without having ever seen anything eternal, we have so clear an idea of eternity, that is to say, *of being always the same*; if, without having perceived a perfect triangle, we understand it distinctly, and demonstrate so many incontestable truths concerning it, it is a mark that these ideas do not come from our senses.” (Chapter iv.)

The basis, the scope and the spirit of Bossuet's argumentation is in his ideas of the nature of truth. Truth is that which exists, which is eternal, and which has an eternal mode of existence. This can be found only in God. In God all principles of truth resided before the human understanding was created. Truth may be moulded in divers shapes to suit our duties and necessities, but its eternal principle is in God. Truth, being eternal, can only be found or discovered, but not created.

Though the proofs of Bossuet are nothing new, still they are presented in such a clear, graphic manner and with such a force of logic, that one believes them to be original.

A younger contemporary of Bossuet was the Archbishop Fenelon, the “French Plato.” Besides that he presented his argumentation in a graceful, fascinating style, he also produced a new proof of his own, the “nouvelle preuve de l'existence de dieu, tiree de la nature des idees.”

Fenelon's book, “*Traite de l'Existence de Dieu*,” is divided

into two parts, the first of which contains the arguments derived from the general impression of the universe upon man's mind, and from the disclosure of the wonders of the creation in consequence of the discovery of the microscope, telescope and other instruments in the service of natural sciences.

The second part treats of four arguments.

Regarding the proof derived from the imperfection of the human nature, he argues: If it is clear that man is not infinite and perfect, then it is also clear that he does not exist through himself. If man does not exist through himself, he must exist through something else, and that very same "something else," which brought man from non-existence into existence, must be existing through itself, and, being infinite and perfect, is God.

Regarding the proof derived from man's idea of the infinite, Fenelon argues: Where does man derive the idea of the infinite? All that surrounds him is finite and can certainly not impress him with the idea of real infinity. It must be inborn in man, and is a manifestation of the infinite Being itself. "I find two reasons in myself—one is myself and one is above me. That which is in me is very imperfect, faulty, * * * and possesses nothing except what it borrows. The other is common to all men, superior; it is perfect, * * * incapable of ever being exhausted. What is this perfect reason? It is God whom I am seeking."

Concerning the proof derived from the idea of a necessary Being, Fenelon says: It is an indisputable fact that man has, more or less "common sense" or "necessary ideas" by means of which man is enabled to detect a great many absurdities and contradictions, and to pass judgment on a great many things without any preparatory studies. This faculty can be found on a small scale even in children of three

or four years old. This kind of "common sense" does not originate in the flesh fibres nor in the blood substance, but presupposes a necessary being. Whatever effort of mind man may make he can never succeed in doubting that two and two are four; that the whole is greater than any of its parts; that the center of a perfect circle is equidistant from all points of the circumference. These and similar presentations of the "common sense" or of the "necessary ideas" are the rule of man's judgments. Far from being able to correct or change this rule he is corrected by it and considers it his guide in all his decisions.

Fenelon's new argument advanced in the fourth chapter of the second book of his "Traite" is in essence as follows: "My ideas are myself; for they are my reason. My ideas and the basis of myself or of my mind, appear but the same thing. On the other hand, my mind is changing, uncertain, ignorant, subject to error, precipitate in its judgments, accustomed to believe what it does not clearly understand, and to judge without having sufficiently consulted its ideas, which are by themselves certain and immutable. My ideas, therefore, are not myself, and I am not my ideas. What shall I believe that they can be? Are my ideas God? They are superior to my mind, since they verify and correct it; they have the character of the Divinity, for they are universal and immutable like God; they really subsist, according to a principle that we have already established. *Nothing exists so really as that which is universal and immutable.* If that which is changing, transitory and derived, truly exists, how much more so *that which can not change and which is necessary.* It is necessary to find in nature something existing and real, something that is within me and is not myself; something that is superior to me; something that is ever in me when I am not thinking of it; something with

which I believe myself alone as though I were only with myself. I know not what this something so admirable, so familiar, so unknown can be else, except God."

The writings of Bossuet and Fenelon had a great influence upon religious people. Their intelligent, persuasive, inquiring, suggestive, amiable and gentle way of writing had a great effect upon those who liked to be confirmed in their belief in God, and also upon those who themselves were unable to express what they believed in a mode that would do justice to the subject; but they had no effect upon the following generation of French materialists. Materialism became the spirit of the age. The "System de la Natur" and the "Encyclopedie Francaise" were the products of that materialistic tendency. In the "System de la Natur" the existence of a God is entirely denied, while in the "Encyclopedie" God is presented as "the animation," "the universal life," "the laws of material essence" and "nature;" but in fact the spirit, the views and the tendency of both works were about the same. Both subserved the cause of materialism, and were aimed at the destruction of the Church.

The "System de la Natur," the "Encyclopedie Francaise," the works of Voltaire, Rousseau, Volney and others, were so many combustibles deposited in the citadel of the Christian religion. The great French Revolution was the ignition and the explosion. The misery, mortification, trouble and tribulation of the priesthood and of the Church, during that epoch, were unprecedented in the ecclesiastical history. While some of the priesthood considered these sufferings of the Church a mere season of affliction and trials which must be endured with firm belief in the sacredness of the creed, there were others who looked upon it as upon the

work of the metaphysical philosophy and rationalism that had permeated and seized the age, created a new national literature, and engrossed the attention of all who were striving for prominence, power and popularity. They were right in taking it in this light. What was to be done? Opposition, and nothing but opposition to the spirit of the age, would not do. That would make it worse. The clerical body realized that the best and the only way to restore the authority and the power of the Church was to make concessions; to lead the spirit of the age into other directions; to detract some of its virus, and to fight the spirit of the age with its own weapons. This gave rise to the "Ecole Theologique," the "French Theological Schools" which made it its end to reconcile the metaphysical philosophy of the age with the doctrines of Christianity; to show the fallacies of materialism and to prove the rationality of the Christian dogmas; to demonstrate the necessity of the Church authority and to make revelation the starting-point of all sound philosophy.

The main representatives of this "Ecole Theologique" are Joseph De Maistre, Abbe Lamennais, Viscomte de Bonald, Baron de Eckstein, M. Ballanche, Abbe Bautain, M. Maret, P. I. B. Bucher, Gustave De Cavour, and the editors of and contributors to the "Universite Catholique."* These men have brought to their task great genius, splendid talents, pure devotion, burning zeal, and calmness and candidness in the discussion. In their articles, essays and books no new proofs of the existence of God were advanced, but they applied and reproduced the old ones with great talent and

* Robert Blakey's *History of the Philosophy of Mind*, IV., 204-247; 625.

by a great many striking illustrations. The "Ecole Theologique" succeeded remarkably well in its work of reaction and counteraction to the materialistic and destructive tendencies of the French encyclopædists.

VIII. THE ARGUMENTATION OF THE MOHAMMEDANS.

„Betrachte jeden Baum und merke
An jedem Baum ist jedes Blatt
Ein Buch, darauf der Herr der Stärke
Der Schöpfung Sinn verzeichnet hat.“*

The belief that the ancient Arabs were worshipers of planets, plants and stones, and that it was Mohammed who first transplanted the monotheistic idea among them, is at present not quite general. Dr. Ludolf Krehl thinks: "If it is admitted that the Arabs had any connection with the descent of Abraham, then this implies the avowal that monotheism, not the relative monotheism in contradistinction to polytheism, but the absolute monotheism, or, as Schelling styles it, the primitive religion, had a homestead at least among a small portion of the Arabic population. How long that monotheistic belief remained pure, and when it degenerated into polytheism and fetichism, can not be proved, from a lack of all historical documents. It remains also doubtful whether the Semitic tribes, which emigrated from the Northeast to Arabia, have embraced the religious forms of the Arabs, or whether first under the influence of these foreigners the Arabic belief entered into a new phase of development. If this is the case, then the primitive mono-

* Hammer-Purgstall, Persische Duftkoerner.

theism of the Arabs must have degenerated under the foreign influence into a kind of abstruse deism. God was considered extramundane and separated entirely from the cosmos. The idea of an immanent God, which is indispensable with any sound religious want, was lost. When this religious want awakened, a substitute for the immanence of God was sought for. People thought they had found what they were craving for in nature and her phenomena. Thus polytheism had arisen." *

There is a tradition that Mohammed once said, "My followers will be split into seventy-three sects," and, indeed, strife and the splitting into sects commenced immediately after his death. These many sects were all orthodox, and remained so during the whole reign of the Omeiyades, though the metaphysical works of Aristotle, Plato and others were studied, from Syrian translations, diligently and to a large extent. It was first the political strife, attending the expulsion of the Omeiyades by the Abassides that became favorable to rationalism and to liberal doctrines.

Among the Arabs the speculative philosophy was not introduced, as among the Christians, to be a handmaid of theology, but it made its appearance in the train of medical studies. It was self-understood that a prominent physician must be also a metaphysician.

The Arabs, having had much commercial intercourse with the Hindoos, it was very natural that they became acquainted also with their philosophical systems. The Arabic metaphysicians are divided into two groups: the leaders of the Oriental class were Alkindi, Alfarabi, Avicenna and Algazali, while Ibn Badya (Avempace), Ibn Tofail (Abu-

* Ueber die Religion der Vorislamitischen Araber, von Dr. Krehl.

bekr), Ibn Roshd (Averroes), and others, constituted the Moorish School of Spain.

The cornerstone of the Islamitic faith is that "there is one only living and true God, and Mohammed is his prophet." The Koran, the tradition and the law are alike theistic.

The history of the argumentation for the existence of God can derive from the Arabic sources only a confirmation of its idea, but no new proofs. Their speculative theology concerns itself more with the unity and attributes of God. The nature of the Divine will, its relation to the laws of nature, to man's volition and to the historical events, engaged the attention of the Arabic philosophers more than the evidences for the Divine existence.

The belief that "Allah is God," that he is the creator of the world and the source of all goodness, was to the Mohammedans a truth so self-evident that its negation seemed almost impossible to them. The Mutazilite, Abul Hudsail, was of the opinion that *only those* who do not know anything about a "supernatural, immediate revelation" must learn to know God by means of philosophical argumentation, but not so the Moslems. To them it was made conclusively evident by Mohammed's mission.*

The greatest among the Arabic scholars was Alkindi (died 870). He is called the "philosopher of the Arabs." In Professor Dr. Fluegel's biography of Alkindi there are mentioned the titles of two hundred and sixty-five treatises and books which he partly composed and partly translated. They cover the field of philosophy, mathematics, medicine, etc., but in the whole biography there is no trace that he has

* Scharasht ni, Religions-Parteien, Haarbrucker's translation, II., p. 51.

drawn within the sphere of his literary work he proofs of the Divine existence.

Next to Alkindi comes Alfarabi. He was, in the tenth century, Professor of the Aristotelian philosophy at Bagdad, but later he turned a mystic and joined the mystical sect, "the Suffis," at Aleppo. As such he advocated the neoplatonic evolution theory, as set forth in his book, "*Hascha-loth Hanimzaoth*" ("The First Principles"), published by Filipowsky in 1849. According to it, God, being essentially the first cause, produced the first intellect. The first intellect knowing itself and also God, its producer, is a compound and is the producer of the "cosmical soul," which again produced the active reason. By this latter one gradually the first form, and then the first matter, were produced.

The great problem for the followers of the emanation theory was: How could a compound cosmical world arise from an absolute, pure, spiritual being? They believed they had solved it by the assumption that a process of a gradual engrossing of certain ideas and principles, which emanated from God, took place. This whole theory is nothing else but the product of human imagination.

Alfarabi's argument for the Divine existence is expressed with regard to Smoedler's "*Documenta Philosophia Arabum*" (Bonn, 1836), by Professor Dr. Ueberweg,* as follows:

"Among the contents of the metaphysics of Alfarabi, mention should be made of his proof of the existence of God, which was employed by Albertus Magnus and later philosophers. This proof is founded on Plato, Tim. and Aristot. *Metaphys.* (xii.), or on the principle that all change and all development must have a cause. Alfarabi distinguishes between that which has a possible and that

*A History of Philosophy, translated by Morris, 1871, pp. 411-412.

which has a necessary existence, just as Plato and Aristotle distinguish between the changeable and the eternal. If the possible is to exist in reality, a cause is necessary thereto. The world is a composite, hence it had a beginning or was caused. But the series of causes and effects can neither recede in *infinitum*, nor return, like a circle, into itself; it must, therefore, depend upon some necessary link, and this link is the first being (*ens primum*). This first being exists necessarily; the supposition of its non-existence involves a contradiction. It is uncaused, and needs in order to its existence no cause external to itself. It is the cause of all that exists. Its eternity implies its perfection. It is free from all accidents. It is simple and unchangeable. As the absolute good, it is at once *absolute* thought, *absolute* object of thought and the absolute thinking being. (*Intelligentia, intelligibile, intelligens.*) It has wisdom, life, insight, might will, beauty, excellence and brightness. It enjoys the highest happiness, is the first willing being and the first object of will (desire). In the knowledge of this being Alfarabi sees the end of philosophy, and he defines the practical duty of man as consisting in rising, so far as human force permits it, into likeness with God."

This argument for God from the necessity of his being, as set forth by Alfarabi, was also adopted by the greatest Arabic philosopher, Ibn Sina (Avicenna). He has introduced into philosophy a new element, which has exercised a great influence. Technically it is expressed thus: "*Intellectus in formis agit universalitem,*" and means that the genus, as well as the species, the *differentia*, the accident and the *proprium*, are in themselves neither universal nor particular. It is the thinking mind which, by comparison of the similar forms, defines what the genus is.

"Avicenna," says Professor Dr. Ueberweg, "distinguishes several modes of generic existence, viz: *ante res*, *in rebus* and *post res*.

"Genera are *ante res* in the mind of God; for all that exists is related to God as work of art is related to the artist; it exists in his wisdom and will before its entrance into the natural world of manifold existences; in this sense, and only in this sense, is the universal before the individual.

"Realized with its accidents in matter, the genus constitutes the natural thing, *res naturalis (in rebus)*, in which the universal essence is immanent.

"The third mode of existence of the genus is that which has its being conceived by the human intellect."

Avicenna was an Aristotelian and rejected Alfarabi's emanation theory. To him all was actually divine, and as nothing changeable can come from the first cause, which is absolutely unchangeable, he assumed that all was brought about by the first cause by means of the first intellect (*intellectus prima or nous*).

Moses Maimonides adduces an Aristotelian proof in the way it was expressed by Ibn Sina. It reads as follows: The things are either *all* eternal or all transient, or *some* are eternal, while others are transient.

Of this trilemma the first case is false, as we see daily so many things arise and perish.

The second case is false, because, if all is transient, this quality holds good also of the genera, and then whence any rise of things?

Now, it follows that only the third case can be correct, namely, that some things are transient, while others are eternal. Those things which are eternal point to a necessary being, which is subsistent by itself. That is God: being self-subsistent, he is independent of anything and of every

being; being the necessary existence, he is the only one Eternal Being.

With Ibn Sina or Avicenna the metaphysical studies in Arabia reached the summit, and now — as it is everywhere and in everything—a reaction set in.

The representative of that reaction is Algazali (born 1059) in Tus, Persia. He was teacher of philosophy at Bagdad, Damascus and Tus, and pretended to study philosophy with the intention of refuting it.

He tried to refute Alfarabi and Avicenna. The same fate he experienced later by Averroes, the greatest and the most sober Aristotelian among the Arabs.

The Aristotelian philosophy, teaching the eternity of the cosmical matter, was considered a heresy by the orthodox Moslems, and the theologians that contested it were called Mutakallims. Maimonides, whose book, "*Doctor Perplexorum*," was, during the Middle Ages, the main source of information about them, calls them Medabrim. (*Loquentes*.)

In order to understand well the following seven arguments advanced by them against the Aristotelian theory of the eternity of the world, it must be kept in mind that they denied the existence of internal, natural forces, and the existence of objective natural laws, called generally "*nature*." To them the world consisted of incoherent atoms, directed, arranged and composed into bodies, directly by God.

1. The Mutakallim believing the world consisted of atoms incoherent by any internal natural force or law, held that transformation can not take place from within, but it must take place from without. These transforming outside influences point to a transformer, to God.

2. Everything must have a cause, and that cause again another cause, and so on; but no matter how far back the

causes are traced there must be admitted one uncreated, but creating cause. This is the cosmological argument.

3. The atoms of the world being without any internal coherency, were they to remain combined they would never separate, otherwise separation would be an essential feature of theirs; were they to remain separated, they would never combine, otherwise combination would be essential to them. Since they are ready for either case, for separation and combination, there must be a Being separating and combining them.

4. The world is composed of substances and accidents. Every substance is attended by accidents and every accident arises and passes. Now, the accession of these accidents affects the bearers of these substances. Thus being affected the substance must be considered to the extent of the afflictation newly arisen. Thus the whole universe must be considered arisen or created.

5. A subject has become what it is through its relation to figure and measure and through the circumstances of space and time. But it is also imaginable that that subject could be larger or smaller, or of a different figure altogether: or that it might have existed prior or later or in another place. Now that the subjects are just as they are and not different, though they might have been different, proves the existence of a Being that might have determined them to be just what they are. There is no reason why the sun shall be round or why the rose shall be red, but being so it must have been the will of the Supreme Being.

6. The world has only a possible existence. Had it a necessary existence it would be itself God. Now if its existence is merely a possible one then this presupposes a God who has preferred its existence to its non-existence.

7. The creation of the world can be proved by the immor-

talities of the souls, which the philosophers generally admit. Were the world eternal, then the souls of those who have passed away would be infinite in number and of a simultaneous existence. This is not admissible.

These seven arguments of the Mutakallim against the eternity of the cosmical world adduced by Moses Maimonides (Doctor Perplexorium I. 70-74;) were confirmed as genuine and original by the French scholar, Gustave Dugat, who has composed his work "Histoire des Philosophes, et de Theologiens Mussulmans" (1878), with reference to modern researches, and who has reopened sources of Arabic philosophy.

But Maimonides, though he himself agreed with the Mutakallim against Aristotle, that the world was *created* and *not eternal*, rejected all the arguments above mentioned as fallacious, except the second one, the cosmological proof.

He thought that every argument based on the theory that the world was composed of atoms, incoherent by any *internal* law, was false, as it was only too evident that the cosmical world is ruled by internal laws and forces.

The sixth argument, according to which from the idea of the world's possible existence there is inferred the existence of a Being that prefers existence to non-existence, Maimonides considers fallacious. A preference presupposes the existence of two subjects or the existence of a subject which is to assume different forms.

The seventh argument he pronounces false, on the ground that the souls which are left behind, being incorporeal, need neither place nor space; and may thus be infinite in number and simultaneous in existence.

Maimon found fault with the arbitrariness of the Mutakallim in the interpretation of nature and in the assumption of promises devised with the only regard to suit their theory.

that the world was *not caused* nor *eternal*, but *made* or *created*.

They devised how the world should be, in order to warrant their theories; and this fabric of their imagination they declared to be the real world.

Maimonides disapproved of such a proceeding, because he believed in the maxim of the Philosopher Themistius: "The nature of things does not accommodate itself to human opinions, but human opinions must accommodate themselves to the nature of things." (Doctor Perplexor. I. 71.)

THE END.



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